SpaceGamer FantasyGamer

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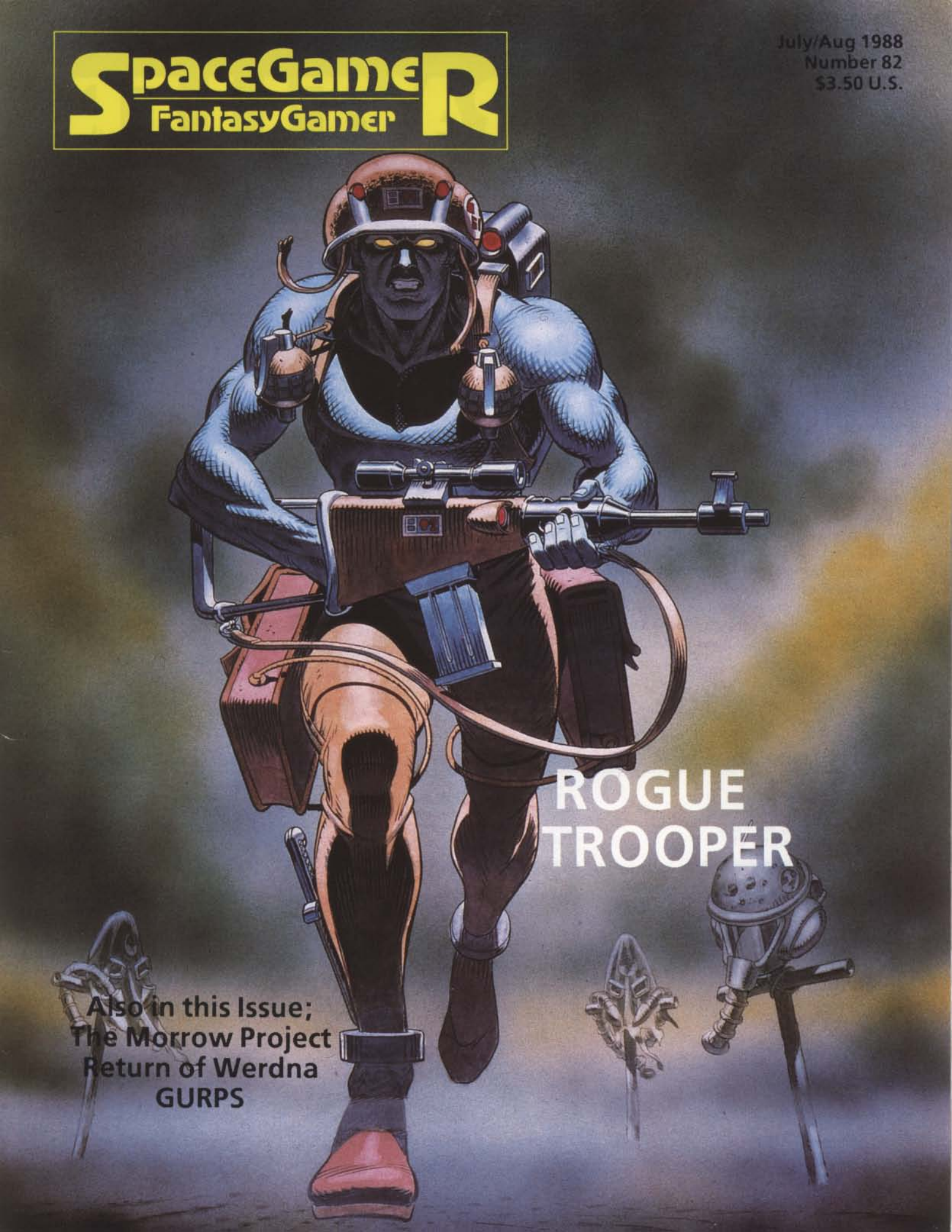

ROGUE TROOPER

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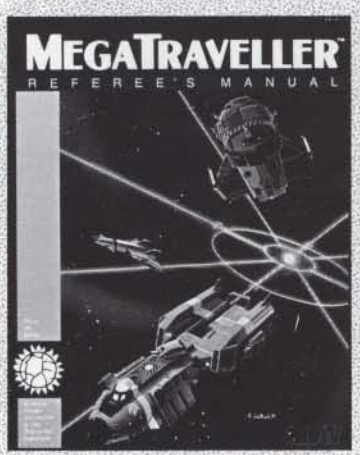

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Pages 5, 10, 29, and 46 by Tim Callender.

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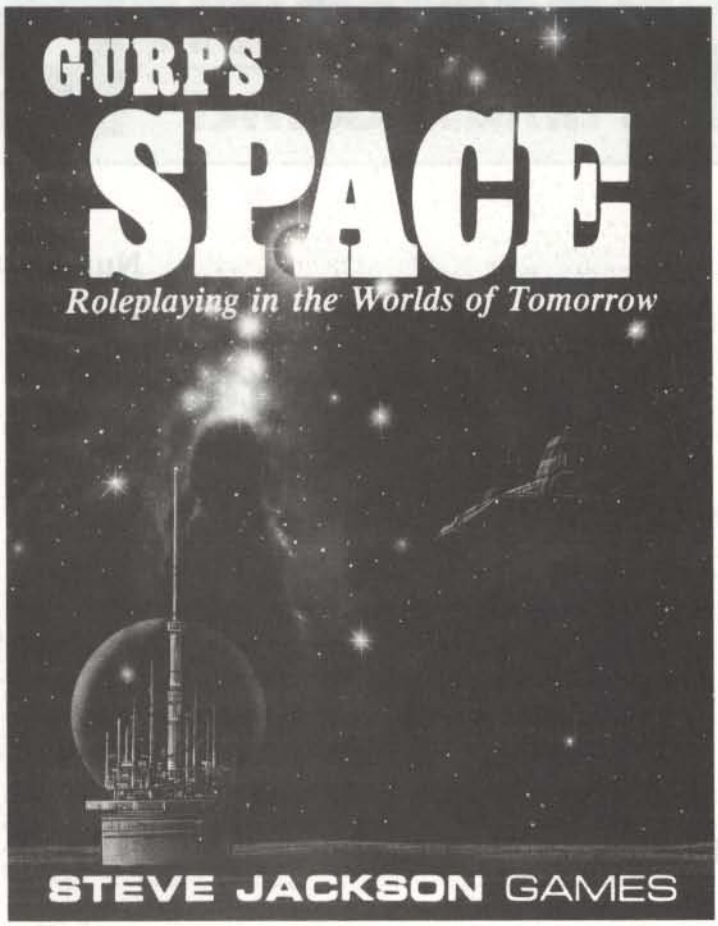
GURPS® Space . . . at Last!



At long last, the day we've dreamed of for nearly a year has arrived! ***GURPS Space*** is finished!

This is our biggest ***GURPS*** worldbook ever — 128 pages. This star-spanning sourcebook presents:

The Stars — Here are detailed, scientifically correct rules for creating star systems and planets . . . either randomly, or to fit a specific campaign.

The Characters — You'll find descriptions for twenty-one character types — and *new* advantages, disadvantages and skills for a far-future campaign. We've included three variant human races — heavy-worlders, light-worlds and Spacers — and guidelines for creating new and different sorts of genetically-enhanced humans. In addition to the variant humans, you'll also find four alien races. Meet the savage near-human Gormelites; the graceful, aggressive Sparrials; the weird, sex-changing Pachekki; and the powerful half-plant Treefolk.

The Hardware — Included are science-fiction gadgets, weapons and medical technology. Starship construction rules cover everything from TL8 (just around the corner) to TL15+ (science fantasy).

The Action — The *abstract* ship combat rules are quick but detailed. There are no ship counters or maps . . . just roleplaying, for a quick determination of fleet damage, individual ship damage and injury to characters.

GURPS Space does not tie your game to a single background. Rather, it is designed to help you develop your *own* universe! Choose the scale of your campaign — one star system, or a million. Choose the type of campaign — space pirates or Star Patrol, hard-working merchants or battle-hardened mercenaries, clever smugglers or starry-eyed explorers, humans or aliens. Choose the political background — from scattered independent worlds, through a loose Alliance or Federation, to a star-spanning Empire. Or perhaps you'd prefer a Corporate State, run by big business. It's all here. Choose the technological background — from a wide variety of stardrives, power plants and weaponry — to give the campaign the scope and flavor you choose. *The Future is yours!*

Also available is the ***GURPS Space*** supplement; ***Space Atlas*** — 29 worlds in which to explore and adventure. A ***GURPS*** adventure, ***Unnight,*** will ship later this summer.

GURPS Space and ***Space Atlas*** are available at your favorite hobby, book or game store. If your local store does not have these Steve Jackson Games products, ***GURPS Space*** is available by mail for $16.50 (Texas residents send $17.82). ***Space Atlas*** is available for $8.50 (Texas residents send $9.18).

For more information, you can also call our Computer Bulletin Board at (512) 447-4449. Send a business-sized SASE for a copy of our free catalog.

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Editorial

This issue features Rogue Trooper and Morrow Project in the Space Section, more GURPS advantage and disadvantages in the Fantasy Section, a profile of Roe Adams and Robert Woodhead the designers of Wizardy IV in the computer section plus the regular columns. Look for more information and scenarios for super hero role-playing. There seem to be more and more people who read comics and game.

Right now there is so much new science fiction material available I would be worried if I weren't so busy trying to acquire and read the stuff. Consider what the recent releases were: Star Wars and Star Warriors from West End; Megatraveller from Game Designers' Workshop; Warhammer 40,000 from Games Workshop; Renegade Interceptor from FASA; GURPS Space and Isaac Asimov's Star Traders from Steve Jackson; and more that I can't recall immediately. Why worried? Because it's so much material that not everyone can buy all of it. So, unless the market for science fiction material has greatly expanded, not all manufacturers will be happy with their sales. This means for some game publishers science fiction will be dropped or pushed to very low priority. There will follow a period where very little science fiction gaming is published. How can a dedicated science fiction gamer cope? Hoarding, it's the only logical way to do it. Buy everything you can, read it later and try to play it once in your lifetime. If we all adopted this approach, there would be more gaming material available all the time, because manufacturers would have higher sales etc. Organize your gaming group. Each member picks a line and buys it. This kind of committment will benefit us all!

Seriously, all these things to choose among, at the same time, is unnerving. Wonderful, but unsettling. Although, I could grow accustomed to it.

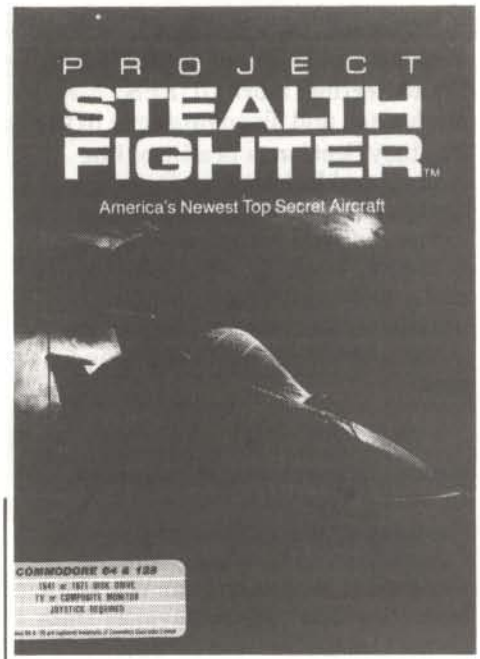
Where are those letters? I know you're busy but feedback is what helps a magazine give its readers what they want. Do your part, write.

Next issue will feature Living Steel on the cover and an article or scenario, and more neat stuff. Convention Report

Dragonmeet

Held by Games Workshop US at the Marriott Hotel near Baltimore's Inner Harbor November 27-29th Attendance around 350 gamers. Small, but well stocked dealer's room. An event room for seminars and discussions for the guests. A gaming room with continous gaming events. An art exhibition featuring works by two of the guests. Guests for the con were Keith Parkinson, Larry Elmore both of TSR, Inc, Ken Rolston, Ed Wimble of Chessex, Inc., and Barry Nakazono and David McKenzie of Leading Edge Games. If you wanted a break from the gaming, you could participate in the Dragonmeet Trivia Quiz run by Tim Olsen of Games Workshop US.

This is the place to discover what's new in gaming products. There will be a list of scheduled releases from the manufacturers. Short write-ups of new products and events will be included to help make your gaming more enjoyable.



New Releases

These products are scheduled for early 1988. Last minute changes and delays are possible.

The Avalon Hill Game Co.
Chaosium, Inc.
Columbia Games,Inc.
FASA Corporation
Game Designers' Workshop
Games Workshop US
Iron Crown Enterprises
Minas Tirith, City of Middle-earth, Hardbound Supplement for MERP
Ancient Greece: Age of Heroes, Supplement for Fantasy Hero and Rolemaster
The Dynamiters, Sherlock Holmes Book
Adventurers Club #12 Leading Edge Games
Trident RMRK, Living Steel Supplement
Mayfair Games, Inc
New Infinities Productions, Inc
Nova Game Designs
Locust, Battle Tech Book
Riflem[illegible], Battle Tech Book
Palladium Books
Rafm, Inc
Ral Partha Enterprises, Inc
Sleuth Publications
Steve Jackson Games, Inc
GURPS Conan Worldbook,GURPS Supplement
GURPS Bestiary, GURPS Supplement
GURPS Aliens, GURPS Supplement
Tag Industries
Task Force Games
Timeline, Ltd
Prime Base, Morrow Project Supplement
TSR,Inc
West End Games,Inc

Dagon is a science fiction and fantasy fanzine published by John Boardman, 234 East 19th Street, Brooklyn, NY 11226-5302.

Skyrealms of Jorune offers a series of nine Essays covering the culture and other events on Jorune. Available individually at 50¢ each or all nine for $4.00. Skyrealms of Jorune, PO Box 5543, Berkeley, CA 94705.

Quail Canyon Systems announced two play-by-mail games, Ruler of the Galactic Web and Stellar Syndicate is a game of galactic crime. Quail Canyon Systems, 8532 E 24th St, Tucson AZ 85710.

Bard Games released two more titles on Talislanta, The Talislantan Handbook and a Naturalist's Guide to Talislanta. Both are written by Stephan Michael Sechi and illustrated by P D Breeding. The handbook is $9.95, the guide $12. Bard Games, PO Box 7729, Greenwich, CT 06836.

Emprise Games Systems is recruiting for Warp Force Empires a play-by-mail space game that limits player diplomacy to the game by use of Correspondence Gamer's Symbolic Language. Emprise Game Systems, PO Box 9078, Van Nuys, CA 91409-9078.

MicroProse announced the release of Project: Stealth Fighter and Airborne Ranger for the C-64 and C-64/128. Stealth Fighter is a simulation of a radar elusive jet fighter and Airborne Ranger is a single soldier simulation. MicroProse Software, 120 Lakefront Dr, Hunt Valley, MD 21030.

Sir-Tech Software announced the release of Deep Space: Operation Copernicus a computer space combat simulator for the Apple II, C-64, Tandy SX, IBM PC and compatibles. Sir-Tech Software, Inc, PO Box 425, Charlestown Mall,

Ogdennsburg, NY 13669.

TimeLords is the title of a universal role-playing system published by the Blacksburg Tactical Research Center. The game lets the players choose how complex the game is by providing varying levels of detail in the rules. Blacksburg Tactical Research Center, 1925 Airy Circle, Richmond, VA 23233.

The Star Battles Association, a division of Future Combat Simulations, publishes a fanzine called Alpha Supplement Omega. For a cuurent issue send $2.00 and your name and address to:
Future Combat Simulations
PO Box 9143
Anaheim CA 92812-9143.

Elfguest fans take note. Apple Comics will publish Elfquest: Siege at Blue Mountain #6 in January. This issue features a face off between Rayek and Winnowill.

Several comic publishers are offering postcards and buttons of some of their titles. Dark Horse has Boris the Bear and Concrete. First Comics has Lone Wolf and Cub.

Gatekeeper is a new quarterly publication that features both comics and role-playing. Gatekeeper is the name of the comic which features Kavaka, a Tarkian bard on Delicar. Each issue will also have a generic role-playing scenario based in the world of Delicar. Gatekeeper Publishing, 1418 Clancy, Flint MI 48503.

Watchmen is featured the whole month of January by DC Comics. Products scheduled for release are a portfolio, a t-shirt, a watch (with a blood splat on a smiley face), and a limited edition.

Marvel Comics is featuring the NEW new universe. They're starting things off by destroying Pittsburgh.

First Comics has new teams and favorites returning. Howard Chaykin comes back to American Flagg. Flagg will go to Russia to teach the Soviets how to be Americans. The new teams are Chuck Dixon and John Statema on Evangeline and Marv Wolfman, Bill Jaaska and Ralph Cabrera on Sable.

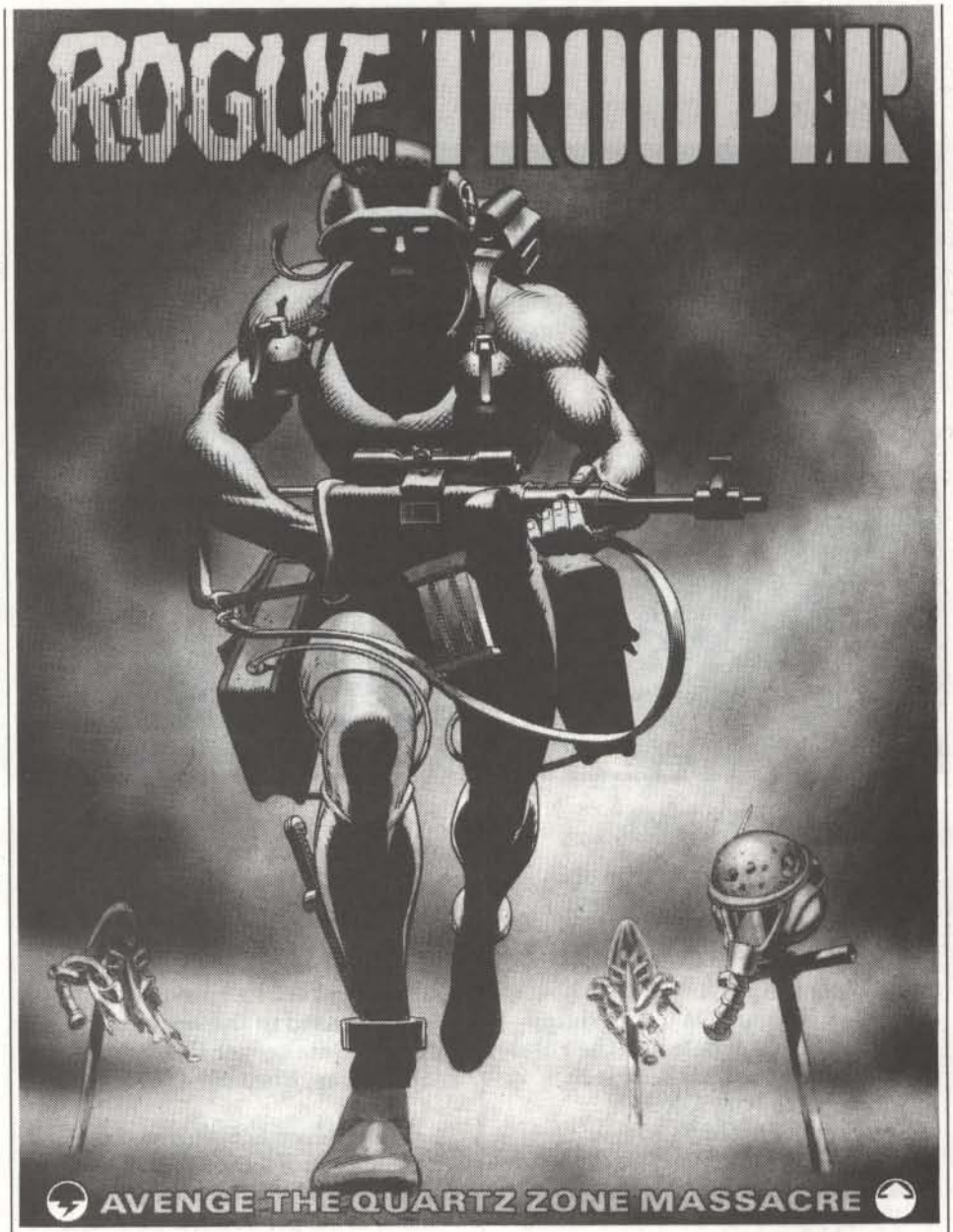
Steve Jackson Games, Inc announced it acquired the rights to do boardgames and GURPS supplements based on Andre Norton's Witch World. Expected publication is late in 1988.

The Armory is offering figure cases in three different foam insert designs. Prices range from $5.95 to $18.95. The Foam inserts available are Cubed Foam for all sixes, Solid Foam, and MicroArmor and 15mm scale. The Armory, 4145 Amos Ave, Baltimore, MD 21215.

Sir-Tech released an interactive adventure called the Seven Spirits of Ra, based on the adventures of Osiris in the Land of the Dead. The game is available for Tandy, IBM PC's and compatibles.

The Avalon Hill Game Company announced that a computer version of Victory Games' Civil War is available for the IBM PC. In the works are Baseball Stat Manager, a database to help display and track statistics, and Wooden Ships and Iron Men. The Statis-Pro 1986 season disk is also available.

Who Is Rogue Trooper?



A new feature for SPACE GAMER / FANTASY GAMER readers starts this issue. It's a look at the comic books' industry, what's planned, and how it can effect roleplaying. ROGUE TROOPER, this month's cover feature and a game by Games Workshop, is based on an English comic book, and is the subject of the first column.

by
Martin Stever

For many gamers on this side of the Atlantic their first exposure to Rogue Trooper has come with the release of the new board game from Games Workshop. For those in England, Rogue Trooper has been a regular event since September of 1981, when Rogue and his buddies, Helm, Gunner, and Bagman first appeared in **2000 AD.** Rogue was created by Gerry Finley-Day, one of England's busiest comics writers and Dave Gibbons, an artist who had been well known to U.K. audiences and recently came into his own here in the U.S. with the publication of **Watchmen** from DC Comics.

2000 AD isn't like comics here in America. It's a WEEKLY comic tabloid that receives distribution at newstands and comic shops throughout England. Another major difference between **2000 AD** and most American comics is that British audiences wouldn't have known Rogue Trooper is blue if itweren't for his appearances on the covers of **2000 AD** because **2000 AD** is in black and white. Each issue contains three to six features. The lead feature being the ongoing adventures of Judge Dredd, himself the subject of three games by Games Workshop. Regulars other than Judge Dredd and Rogue Trooper have included the ABC Warriors, Strontium Dog, Robo-Hunter, and Judge Anderson. Each week's Rogue Trooper installment in **2000 AD** is a complete story and, at the same time, a chapter in a larger saga. The rule book in the Rogue Trooper game actually contains the first chapter of Rogue Trooper taken from **2000 A.D.**

The earlier adventures of Rogue Trooper often included flashbacks. The Genetic Infantry Men's regiment's first mission was planned to end the war on Nu-Earth once and for all. Unfortunately the Norts' elite Kashan Legion was waiting for the blue skinned GI's. The complete story of the ambush that came to be known as the Quartz Zone massacre was revealed one piece at a time during the first few months of Rogue's run in **2000 AD**.

As it turns out Rogue's three micro-chip buddies are aptly named. Before being killed in the ambush by the Kashan Legion, Bagman was the guy who always had a little extra ammo in his pack. He was killed when a Kashar Drill Probe came up behind the lines during the Quartz Zone massacre. Helm was one of the smarter guys in the outfit. He and Rogue were the only GI's to

survive the "breakout" after the ambush by the Kashan Legion. Having escaped the Quartz Zone, Rogue and Helm waded into the Orange Sea, towards a friendly Souther Sea-Shuttle. Unfortunately Nort-Foils appeared and blew the Sea-Shuttle apart, catching Helm in the blast. Before Helm died he told Rogue that there must have been a traitor feeding information to the Norts. Rogue was left the sole survivor of the Quartz Zone massacre.

One flaw in the Rogue Trooper game is that if there had been more than one survivor they would have never fought. It is conceivable that they would work alone to get the traitor, thus cutting the chance revenge would be made impossible by a single Nort attack. For this reason players should not attack each other unless directed to do so by a mission card. Furthermore, you might consider making Exchanging Clues mandatory for a "defending" player should the "attacking" player choose that option for a GI encounter. Remember, the primary goal for a Genetic Infantryman must be to find and kill the traitor.

In **2000 AD** as in the game, Rogue Trooper often encounters Nort enemies. Although he can usually evade the Norts, Rogue is often drawn into conflicts to save Southers, the people for whom he was engineered to fight. In the war for Nu-Earth, the Southers are out numbered and out gunned. Their main weapon being good old fashioned infantry. Meanwhile, the Norts have developed dozens of diabolical weapons, from hard rain to airborne decapitators. Norts, those scurilous scum, also use snipers, do not accept surrenders, and have been known to purposely target defenseless women and children. Rogue has learned that there are some bad apples among the Southers, but they are still his people and they are far superior to the basically evil Norts.

To track down the traitor, Rogue and his pals follow up a series of clues. When Rogue meets a Nort spy or Nort general blasts him, Rogue and might find a clue among his effects or get a clue from a Souther he saved in the process. When he meets a Souther general or Souther spy the ally might give him some clue out of respect for Rogue's attacks on the Norts. Each clue brings Rogue closer to the traitor. As Rogue and his micro-chip buddies begin to close in on the spy the Norts begin to close in on Rogue. He becomes one of the Norts most hated enemies and a huge price is put on his head. At the same time the cowardly arms dealers Bland and Brass lust after Rogue's intelligent weaponry, which could fetch a pretty penny on the black market.

Rogue's main weapons against such terrible odds are his speed, skill, and cunning. He often uses his buddies as diversions so that he can close in for hand-to-hand combat. Rogue uses his las scapel to burst through Nort suits, killing the Norts with the poisonous atmosphere of Nu-Earth. Rogue is surprisingly fast for his size, often using his pack as a weapon, swinging it faster than a normal GI can bring his gun to bear. Rogue rarely misses a shot, can use almost any piece of equipment as a weapon, and any loose stone as cover. Although Genetic Infantryman, Rogue, with the help of his pals, manages to regularly accomplish the impossible.

The ultimate appeal of Rogue Trooper is like that of many lone warriors. Although he is a highly trained killer he hates the concept of war, a futuristic Shane. The Rogue Trooper strip is the ultimate warrior. Rogue is haunted and driven by his past and the ghosts of pals. At the same time he is always willing to postpone his mission to save a fellow Souther. Many of Rogue's adventures are recognizable tales as old as war: the kid who freezes and causes the deaths of his buddies only to save the day in the end, the racist sargeant, the guy who doesn't trust Rogue (who is technically a deserter) until Rogue saves his life, and the soldier who goes kill crazy. All these stories appear in Rogue Trooper and make the underlying theme, the uselessness of war, as important as the plot.

Will Rogue find the traitor and kill him? Will Helm, Gunner, and Bagman ever make it back into cloned bodies? Will the war that has ravaged Nu-Earth ever end? You can find out three ways. Rogue Trooper's adventures are being reprinted in color, in normal comic book format, by Quality Comics. Back issues are still valued at cover price ($1.25) according to the Overstreet Price Guide. Issue #8 was released in October. The weakness of the Quality version is that the colors over the original inks are a bit garish. Rogue Trooper is also available in graphic novel format from Titan Books. So far five volumes of Rogue's adventures have been collected. Each volume costing $8.95, $9.95 for volume 5. These volumes are in the original black and white and present the story in a larger size, closer to its original format. Rogue Trooper's current adventures are available in **2000 AD** which is now imported into the US and is available through most quality comic shops. If you don't see it ask the retailer to order it, as it is easily available, and remember Rogue's motto, "the biggest joke is war itself."

Slavers' Hold

A Morrow Project Adventure

by D. Patrick Beckfield

After the War, the country had vanished. In all places life continued. On the Range, there were those who wished it hadn't.

Pre-War

The region of Minnesota called the Iron Range, from Duluth to the Canadian border, was rich in iron ore and arable land. The rail and road system centered around Duluth and served to transport grain and ore to the port city on Lake Superior. The area was under-industrialized and under-populated. The Range was heavily hit by the recession of the 1970's and 80's.

Several universities and colleges served the Range. Principal among these was the University of Minnesota - Duluth. This school provided courses in medicine, nursing, agriculture, veterinary medicine, and military science (as part of the Air Force ROTC program).

The War

When the bombs fell, Duluth was preparing for the November storms. Many large vessels were preparing to end the shipping season with one last shipment to the seaway. The berths of the commercial docks were filled and pleasure craft were lining up to be pulled from the water. When the warhead struck Duluth Harbor, the Great Lakes merchant fleet was destroyed.

In addition to the destruction of the ships, a cubic mile of mud was thrown into the air. This rained down on northern Wisonsin and the upper peninsula of Michigan. A tidal wave one hundred meters tall swept through the basin, scouring the flood plain and leaving an eerie, desolate marsh.

Post-War

In the aftermath of the War, one out of every ten people survived. Distribution of scarce resources was managed by the officer-candidates from UMD. The best organized areas were under control of the ROTC, who felt it necessary to declare martial law.

At first, the ROTC remained responsible to the chancellor of UMD and to local military authority. In time, however, they realized that they held real power and refused to be controlled. They took control of the resources and materials of survival, and set the stage for the return of a feudal society.

The Team Recon G-23B

Recon Team G-23B was frozen on 8 September 1984. They are one of several teams distributed through the Lake Superior region. The team is aware, however, that assistance from other teams would be as much as a week in coming. The team is not aware of the location of any other Morrow Project unit or the number of units assigned to this area. The team members all trained together, and are familiar with each other and all of their equipment.

The assigned mission of team G-23B is to reconnoiter the Iron Range and, specifically, the mines around Hibbing and Virginia. The standing orders are to assist the local population in any manner, establish communications with other units of the Morrow Project, and to survive.

The team is not familiar with the area, except from orientation lectures and their maps.

Members of the team were selected for their knowledge of mining operations, agriculture, and soft sciences, such as psychology and history. They were selected for their likely survival in woodlands and in dealings with refugee population.

The team's equipment, weapons, and vehicle are all in perfect condition. When they awaken in the bolt hole, they will find everything they will need for short-term survival. The bolt hole itself is poorly designed as a base. Once opened, the vehicle doors cannot be closed. There is no water or sanitary facilities. It is simply a garage built to withstand a nuclear war.

The team can find additional ammunition and equipment in the supply caches hidden in their area by the project. These caches can be located using the AutoNav, as

described in the Morrow Project manual, TM1-1. If the AutoNav is damaged, these locations will be lost. The AutoNav will not direct them to the cache, but to an item, such as a signpost or historical marker, that conceals a message giving the location.

Terrain and Environment

This region is known for its rugged beauty. The Mesabi Range where the iron is mined continues to Lake Superior. It is not easily crossed without a road. Generally, valleys run east to west, though there are some river valleys that take a course across this terrain. Since the War, the forest has reclaimed the land.

The climate has gotten colder since the War. There are some valleys that have snow on the southern slopes until July. The average high in summer is 70 F. There have been sightings of kodiak and polar bears. In the winter temperatures can drop to -65 F and not rise above zero for weeks. Shelter will be imperative if the team stays for the winter.

People of the Land

In general, the society of the area (Duluth, Virginia, and Hibbing) is identical to the feudal baronies of the Middle Ages. At the bottom of the social structure is the slave. The slave provides energy to do work considered too dangerous for horses or cattle. The slave can expect to be worked until he or she drops, and lacks all rights -- even to food.

Just above the slave is the serf. The only real difference between the two is that a serf is allowed to protest harsh treatment, if he can find someone to listen. Where a slave belongs to an owner, a serf belongs to the land he farms or the craft-shop he operates.

Above the serf is the soldier. These are the muscle behind the rulers. Soldiers take what they want, as long as their lord does not want it also. Soldiers are usually the task masters for slaves and press-gangs of serfs.

At the top of the social order are the ROTC are Rot-Keys. These are feudal barons who maintain some of the trappings of their more-honorable predecessors. They rise in the ranks through the extinction of their superiors, and assassination is not uncommon among the more power-mad. Not all of the Rot-Keys are corrupt, but the corrupt are in power and more visible.

Virginia

The supplies of raw iron for the Rot-Keys come from the taconite mines near Virginia. Virginia is an almost deserted town. It serves as a garrison for the mines and a supply depot for the soldiers. About 100 soldiers operate out of the town, half to guard the mines, the other half to protect the town and the route to Duluth. The civilian population numbers 700 serfs, craftspeople, and peasants, and 100 slaves in the mines and serving the garrison.

Within the confines of the village can be found the Rot-Key operated store. (Map 1, A) Hard goods, seed, cloth, and similar goods can be bought at artificially inflated prices (Refer to PF-005 for base prices in a barter economy). The store is operated by Hiram Lag. He and his family live across the street in an abandoned dry cleaners. Hiram supports the Rot-Key enthusiastically. He sees them as protectors and as a civilizing influence.

Next to the store is the home/office of "Doc" Ding Westover(C). Westover is little better than a quack. The potions he doles out are little better than swamp water--which is the principal ingredient of most of them. Since he has not harmed the Rot-Keys, they keep him on to treat minor injuries and run the still.

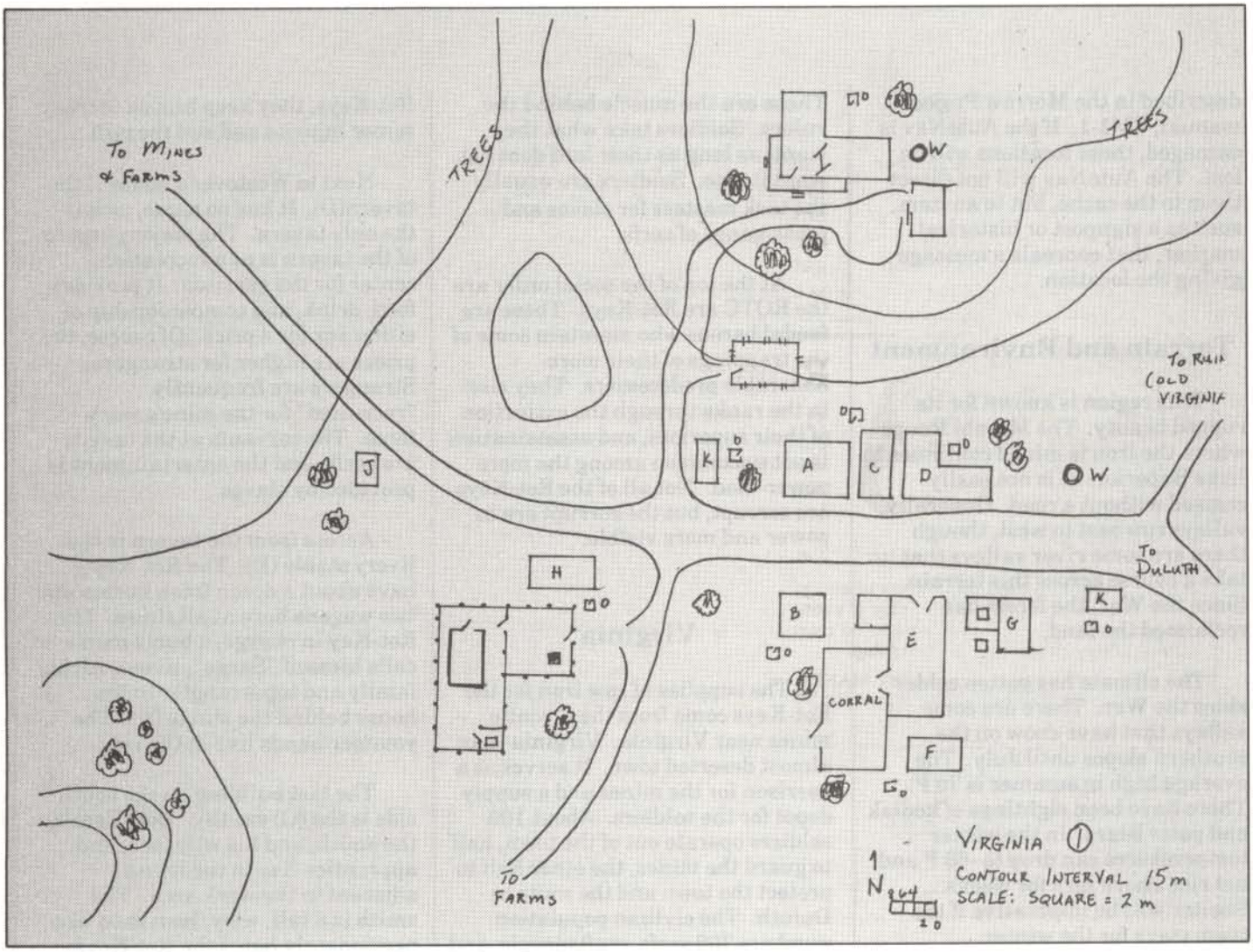
Next to Westover's house is the tavern(D). It has no name, as it is the only tavern. The major purpose of the tavern is as a recreation center for the garrison. It provides food, drink, and companionship of either sex for a price. Of course, the prices are higher for strangers. Strangers are frequently "recruited" for the mine's work force. The servants at the tavern are serfs, and the entertainment is provided by slaves.

Across from the tavern is the livery stable (E). The Rot-Keys have about a dozen fresh horses and two wagons here at all times. The Rot-Key in charge, a burly man who calls himself "Sarge", lives with his family and top wrangler in the house behind the stable (F). The younger hands live in the loft.

The last building on the south side is the (G) smithy. Dorf Escola, the smith, and his wife, son, and apprentice live in the house adjacent to the work area. The smith is a tall, wiry, lean man who passionately hates the Rot-Keys, but is not allowed to leave. When he last tried to escape, the Rot-Keys fractured his skull and broke his leg. His son was taken to Lt. Carter's house and later returned on the edge of a coma. The boy still refuses to describe what happened.

On the west side of the village is the home and stock yard of Davy Lassis, slave trader (H). Auctions are held twice each month in the summer, if hunting is good. Most of his stock goes to the mines, but some are sold to slave trains heading west, or to galleons plying the Lakes. Three former slaves help in the human traffic. Behind the house are the slave pens.

On the road at either end of the village are the guard posts (K). Each is occupied by five soldiers These are their living quarters, armory, and post. An assortment of firearms and homemade bombs can



be found in the shacks.

North of the town is the house occupied by Lt. Carter (I). It is the largest house in town. Fifteen soldiers and fifty slaves and servants are present to care for the lieutenant and protect her. Any extra personnel are kept in barracks downhill from the house. Animals are kept in the stable and barn, and slaves are locked in the basement when not working.

Two wells provide the drinking water for the town. One is at the east end of the town, the other is at the lieutenant's house (W). Behind or near most dwellings are outhouses (O).

The Mines

To the west of Virginia, approximately 15 km, are the mines operated by the Rot-Keys. The mines are built in a pre-war open pit mine, and use the high wall created for part of the prison. Surrounding the camp is a wooden pallisade four meters high (A) with one opening to allow traffic in and out. A guard in the shack at the gate (B) screens traffic coming in during the day. The gates are closed and barred a few hours after sunset.

Inside the wall there are watch towers (C). The towers are six to eight meters high, except the two on top of the ridge, which are at ground level.

Across the south side of the compound are the living quarters for the soldiers. The buildings in the area are; the barracks (D), housing up to 20 people each; the mess hall (E); the store room (F); and a slave pen (G). The slave pen holds the servants and "special selections".

North of the mess hall is "the box" (H). This is an iron box half-buried in the ground for disciplining slaves and extremely unruly soldiers. In the sun, the temperature can reach 140 degrees inside, and at night the interior can be covered with frost. Few people have survived more than three days in the box.

The largest building in the compound is the iron works (I). It stands ten meters high, plus the chimney. The southern end of the building is stone and houses the furnace. The remainder of the building is dedicated to separating the iron from the slag and forming it into ingots, bars, and rods. The west face of the building is open on the upper half to allow ore to be dumped

from the mine cars into the hopper that feeds the furnace.

The furnace is fed on wood or coal. (The coal is bought with iron and slaves from traders on the Lake). Crews must work everyday to keep the furnace going, and the entire complement of the camp must spend two days each month gathering wood. When the furnace is operating the smoke is visible for four kilometers.

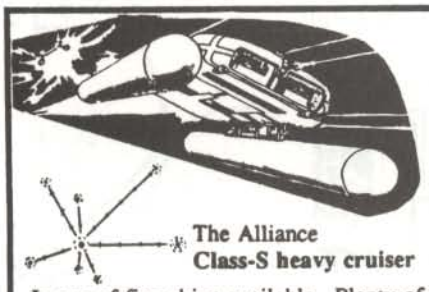
Across the clearing from the ironworks is the armory (J). The main weapons and ammunition supplies are kept here. In this stone walled, earth-reinforced structure will be found: 12 percussion cap rifles, caps, powder, and balls; two S&W M29-61/4 revolvers and 200 rds of ammunition; two Remington Model 870 12 gauge shotguns and 150 shells; and one 3-inch cannon, powder, 15 cannon ball and 20 loads of grape shot. The armory is closed with an iron-banded door, locking from either side. In an emergency, the armory can be used as an "inner fort". Any weapon (except the cannon) can be fired through the ventilation slots at targets in the open in any direction.

To the north of the clearing is the stable. Fifteen horses and three wagons can be kept there comfortably. The trusted slave who cares for the animals sleeps in a room inside the stable.

Directly north of the ironworks is the large slave pen (K). In the summer it is occupied by the eight slaves who work in the foundry and gather wood. In the winter, the entire complement of slaves is housed here. This keeps them warm, and makes guarding them easier.

The western third of the camp is an area called "inside". It is cut off from the rest of the camp by a four-meter tall fence of barbed wire. The only way in or out is through the double gate or on the tracks that lead to the ironworks. The slaves who work the mines are kept inside at all times. The pens inside (L) are surrounded by barbed wire and house 20 people. Near the south fence is the cook shack (N) where two meals are prepared on good days.

The west wall of the camp is the cliff face. Three of the mines (M) open at ground level, and two more



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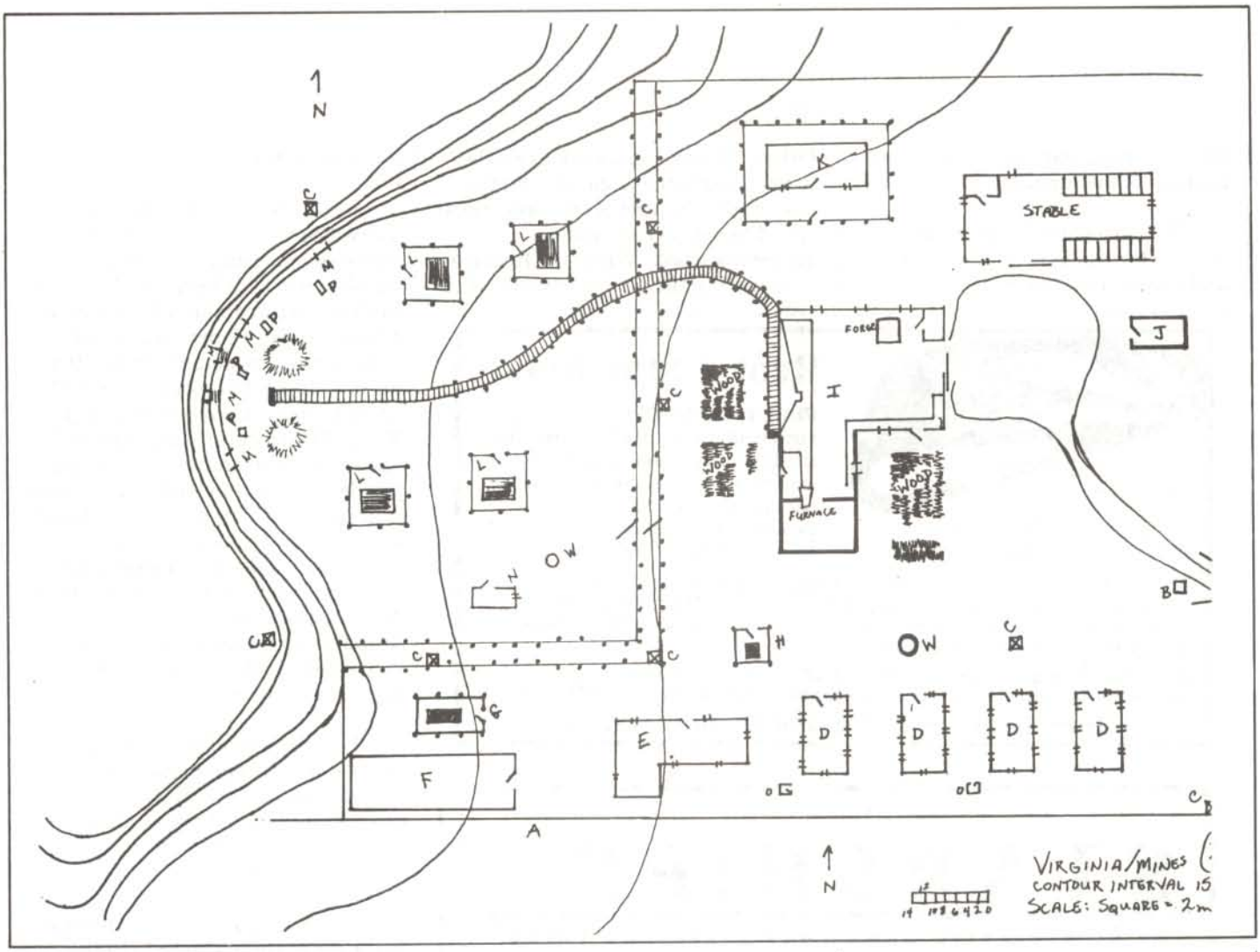

are 15 meters above. Each mine winds into the mountain for several miles, making it necessary to pump air in from the surface. Eight slaves operate four pumps. Ore is loaded into cars that roll down the track to the ironworks. These cars must be pulled back up the grade with a block and tackle.

Two wells (W) provide water for the camp. One is north of the barracks, the other "inside" by the cook shack.

The Rot-Keys
Lt. Alice Carter

Carter is a pale woman, blond with blue eyes, standing one and two-thirds meters tall. There is little charm, or even warmth, in Carter. When she is not nearby, she has been called "the Ice Maiden".

Carter is well trained in close combat. She is always armed with a Mamba automatic pistol and 45 rounds of ammunition, kept carefully dry. A stilleto is hidden in a forearm sheath under her tunic. At all times she carries one or more poisoned hat pins in her clothing.

Carter enjoys testing poisons and methods of spreading poisons. As yet, she has not found a usable nerve gas, but she sends scouts to any reported locations of pre-war equipment.

Sgt. Bo Douglass

Douglass is the son of the previous leader of the Rot-Keys. He suspects that he was killed by Carter's predecessor, but no proof is available. When his father was killed, Douglass was too young to take his place.

Physically, Douglass is an impressive two and a quarter meters tall. He is muscled to an extent that makes people doubt his intelligence. Douglass has won so many contests that few people will compete against him.

Douglass is a quiet man who knows how to bide his time. He lets people think he is dumb and lets them make the first mistake. His long term goal is to end slaving by the Rot-Keys. His short term objective is to replace Lt. Carter as the administrator of the Virginia mines.

The weapons favored by Douglass are the Remington Model 870 shotgun and a Bowie knife that is as long as his thigh. He has a good feel for tactics and a devotion to the men under his command.

Thomas Arcodopolis
Gunsmith

Arcodopolis is a skilled craftsman who is favored by the Rot-Keys. To him, this a great benefit for his goal of loosening the Rot-Keys' grip on the craftsmen. He wants to build a crafthall for wood and metalsmiths. Also, he hopes he can protect his daughter from the troops.

Arcodopolis sees slaves as competition for the workers. It is not good or bad, in fact, he feels it is the best way of using the criminal population. He tries very hard to not be a criminal himself, as the definition changes frequently.

People of the Area

The Rot-Keys and the inhabitants of Virginia are not the only ones in the area. On the fringes of their control are a number of people that the team might encounter.

Ian Thundereyes

This is an imposing, tall man of Amerindian and European stock. His eyes are a piercing gray color, seemingly carved from the granite cliffs. Under his gaze, a person may feel the need to review his life for some recent transgression.

Thundereyes was on the last Coucil of Elders to meet at the Deer Creek Reservation. There it was decided that the tribe would take up the nomadic life, leaving Thundereyes and some followers and their families to stay and keep the tribal rituals at that place. He has seen the Rot-Keys at work and has no love for them. They, in turn, have tried to capture or kill him and his followers, but failed. In one instance he seemingly led his people up a flat cliff face to avoid capture, and then returned in the night to spike the Rot-Keys' cannon.

Cora Turner

Turner is a woman running an inn at the edge of the Rot-Keys area of control. She was once considered very beautiful, the only flaw is a scar running from her left ear to her collarbone. Her usual customers look past this easily, as they know she is the best friend they could have.

Turner's inn is the meeting place for the area. She tends the communal still and trades corn liquor and a cooked meal for fresh food, pelts, and trinkets. She is the scribe and witness for the area, being the only literate person outside Virginia for a week long

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hike. Her prized possession is a carefully preserved collection of works by Mark Twain. She will not willingly part with these.

Turner will warn anyone travelling toward Virginia about the Rot-Keys, and will give anyone interested a recount of their activities. She can give an approximation of their equipment and where they were last seen in force.

Dewey Larsen

Larsen is a wandering trader. His pack mule carries an eclectic assortment of trade goods. He proudly claims that he carries the widest assortment of goods this side of the Missus Hip. Among his goods are items of antiquity, such as; batteries, door knobs, glass mugs with the family name on them ("Schmidt"), resistors, and machine screws.

Among his goods is a copy of the **Rand McNally Road Atlas**, 1988 edition. Larsen won't part with this for anything, even though none of the places on it exist as they appear, and he can't grasp the concept of scale or boundaries. If asked, he will claim to have wrested it from the grasp of an evil demon and a varying number of zombies near the blue lake towards the south. When pressed, he will admit winning it from a traveller in a game of chance. The traveller will be described as well kept and very knowledgeable, asking about recent events and people like the team. The stranger disappeared shortly after the game.

The Start of the Scenario

There are three suggested ways of bringing the situation at Virginia to the team's attention. These methods vary, depending on the amount of warning the team is allowed.

The Runaway

In this approach, a runaway slave or a person evading capture runs into the team. The team can then subdue the person, or wonder what's going on as the runaway bolts back out of camp. If the runaway is captured, the team can then hide the person, aiding the escape, attack the pursuing slavers, or turn the captive over to the slavers. The slavers, for their part, will assume that the team is a party of Rot-Keys, as they are known to dress in fatigues similar to the MP issue coveralls.

Refugees

The team can happen on a wagon-load of people trying to evade the Rot-Keys. They will also assume the team are Rot-Keys and, knowing they cannot outrun the vehicle, will prepare to fight for their freedom with desperation. Talking to these people will require great care, as they may not let someone into talking destance.

Chance

The PD may allow the team to enter Virginia without advanced warning of the conditions there. In this approach, the team will undoubtedly be attacked by a sizeable force af slavers. These slavers may not be aware of the firepower of the team and may be driven off. If only one person goes into town, he will probably be lured to the tavern and attacked there. The citizens are not going to help.

New Equipment

What follows is a list of the new equipment used in this scenario.

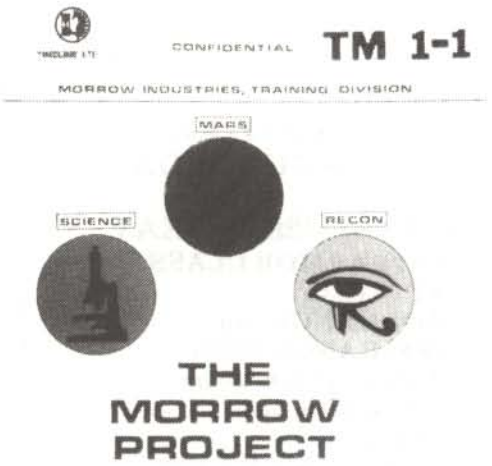
NAME: 3-inch smooth-bore cannon
E-FACTOR: 45 (ball) or 8 (shot)
WEIGHT: 75 kg
MAX EFF RNG: 150m (ball) or 75m (shot)
MAX RNG: 3000m
TYPE OF FIRE: Single shot
RATE OF FIRE: 2 rpm
FEED DEVICE: Muzzle-loading
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
This weapon was the field support artillery of the world of the early 1800's. The gun is mounted on a carriage and towed behind a caisson or two pack animals. Ammunition is of several types: ball, shot, and bursting ball are the most common, though there are others. Ball is a lead ball of the same diameter as the bore. It does damage by pounding its target. Bursting balls are hollow balls containing a charge. This charge is meant to expode the ball and send fragments against the enemy. This is not often perfect; the shell may not shard at all, but fizzle harmlessly. Shot is a paper-wrapped package of pellets, approximately 1/2 inch in diameter. This ammunition is meant for close-range decimation of enemy soldiers. It is not unlike having a 50-caliber shotgun.

NAME: MAMBA
CAL: 9 x 19mm
E-FACTOR: 9
WEIGHT: 1.05 kg (empty)
MAX EFF RNG: 50m
MAX RNG: 2012m
TYPE OF FIRE: Semi-automatic
RATE OF FIRE: 45 rpm
FEED DEVICE: 15 rnd box magazine
ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:
This is an all stainless steel pistol developed by South Africa and Rhodesia. Its large magazine and ambidextrous design make this an excellent combat weapon. Stainless steel was used to compensate for the jungle environment.

"Let'er Rip!"

Krell Heavy Weapons in The Morrow Project

by
Joseph Benedetto,Jr.



One of the problems the Warriors of Krell face is a shortage of heavy weapons. They do have some captured Morrow Project weapons, but the majority of these are low on ammunition, and supplies are not as plentiful as Krell would like, one of the big reasons Krell's forces are striking out to locate and capture MP caches, bases, and boltholes in a search for more supplies.

Right after The War, Krell captured a number of National Guard Armories and US Army Reserve Centers and Supply Depots. This was often easier than it sounds, as many such installations were understrength during the chaos following The End of the World. Thus , Krell's forces obtained large stocks of rifles and small arms, along with a good supply of "obsolete" and "Removed from Service" weapons, such as recoiless rifles and bazookas. With these weapons, Krell led his campaign against the Morrow Project; they supplied his army until several MP caches and bases fell into Krell hands.

A number of these weapons are still around; the present push by Krell's forces has led to some heavy fighting, particularly between his advance patrols and a few, scattered Morrow Project teams (see Project File R-003, **Operation Lucifer**, for more details).

Although most of the Krell small arms are common and have been described in the MPGB or the modules, the non-MP heavy weapons have not been covered; the following charts show the stats of several typical Krell weapons, and their current disposition.

KRELL HEAVY WEAPONS

M20 3.5" Bazooka
CAL. 88.9mm
WT. 4 kg
MIN. RANGE 5m
EFF. RANGE 275m
MAX. RANGE 945m
BURST RADIUS 10m

Introduced in 1950, the M20 Bazooka was eventually replaced by the M72A2 LAW rocket. The M20 fires an 88.9mm rocket projectile with a shaped-charge warhead, and has a highly prominent and very visible backblast (over 30m), and cannot be fired from enclosed areas. About effective as the M72A2 LAW, the M20 has a somewhat shorter range, but can also engage targets at much shorter ranges than the LAW can; the LAW cannot engage targets closer than 50m, while the bazooka can fire at ranges as short as 5m. NOTE: due to the age of the equipment, there is a flat 10% chance that a round will not launch when fired.

In Krell service, one man carries the bazooka and one round of ammo, and a second man (the loader) carries another 6 rounds of ammo, and loads the weapon in combat.

M20 BAZOOKA AMMUNITION

88.9mm M28A2 HEAT

ANTI-ARMOR CLASS D
WT. 4.08 kg
MIN. RANGE 5m
EFF. RANGE 275m
MAX. RANGE 945m
E-FACTOR 1010
DPW 520
BURST RADIUS 10m

Armor Piercing round; impact scatters fragments (E-factor 4) across the burst radius.

88.9mm M30 WP (White Phosphorus)

WT. 4.06 kg
MIN. RANGE 5m
EFF. RANGE 275m
MAX. RANGE 945m
BURST RADIUS 20m
BURN TIME 120 seconds at 2700 C

The bazooka is usually assigned to a 6 man team: Gunner, Loader, and 4 infantrymen to provide covering fire. Bazooka teams are found in, or just behind, the vanguard of the Krell Army.

M18 57mm RECOILESS RIFLE

CAL. 57mm
WT. 21 kg
MIN. RANGE 10m
EFF. RANGE 450m
MAX. RANGE 4438m
BURST RADIUS 10m

This Recoiless Rifle (RR) can be fired from the shoulder, bazooka-style, or its built-in tripod can be set up for firing on the grounk. The weapon is recoiless, and has an excessive backblast--50m long and 25m wide--which prevents it from being fired in an enclosed area. The weapon can fire any one of 4 types of ammunition: HE, HEAT, WP, and CANNISTER.

The 57mm RR is usually assigned to a 6 man team: Gunner, Loader, and four infantrymen for cover, the loader usually carries a box containing 2 cases (8 rounds) of mixed types; often the emphasis is on the T25E5 Cannister (shotgun) round.

The 57mm RR is the most common heavy weapon found in the Krell advance forces, followed by the bazooka. The larger 106mm RR is not usually seen except on special occasions.

M18 RECOILESS RIFLE AMMUNITION

57mm M306A1 HE (Fragmentation Warhead)

ANTI-ARMOR CLASS F
WT. 2.477 kg
MIN. RANGE 10m
EFF. RANGE 450m
MAX. RANGE 4429m
E-FACTOR 5
Dpw 409
BURST RADIUS 24m

57mm M307A1 HEAT

ANTI-ARMOR CLASS E
WT. 2.463 kg
MIN. RANGE 10m
EFF. RANGE 450m
MAX. RANGE 4338m
E-FACTOR 240
Dpw 425
BURST RADIUS 10m

57mm M308A1 WP (White Phosphorus)

WT. 2.463 kg
MIN. RANGE 10m
EFF. RANGE 450m
MAX. RANGE 4129m
BURST RADIUS 17m
BURN TIME 30 seconds at 2700 C

57mm T25E5 CANNISTER ("shotgun" round)

WT. 2.463 kg
MIN. RANGE 0m
EFF. RANGE 175m
MAX. RANGE 175m
E-FACTOR 6 per slug
BURST RADIUS 5x25m cone

Because of the wide variety of ammo available, and the fact that one man can transport it, the 57mm RR is one of the favored Infantry Heavy Weapons of the Krell forces. However, due to the smaller, spin-stabilized HEAT round, the 57mm RR is not as effective an anti-tank weapon as the M20 bazooka, which often follows the M18 teams into combat as backup fire.

M40A2 106mm RECOILESS RIFLE

CAL. 106mm
WT. 115.6 kg
MIN. RANGE 50m
EFF. RANGE 1100m
MAX. RANGE 7700m
BURST RADIUS 20m

This was the heavy anti-tank weapon of the US forces until replaced by the TOW missile system. Due to the size and weight of the weapon, it is usually mounted on a jeep or other vehicle to provide mobility under fire. A number of these weapons in Krell service have been equipped with an AC-20 splinter shield to protect the crew when under fire. The weapon is quite effective, and is occasionally used as an artillery piece in the field; it fires three types of ammo: HEAT, HEP, or APERS.

Because of the size, and the effectiveness of the weapon, the majority of these have been installed in ground defenses around the captured Morrow Project base where Krell habitually goes into hibernation. The remainder of these weapons are mobile, but are held in reserve until definately needed.

M40A2 RECOILESS RIFLE AMMUNITION

106mm M344A1 HEAT

ANTI-ARMOR CLASS C
WT. 16.887 kg
MIN. RANGE 50m
EFF. RANGE 1100m
MAX. RANGE 7700m
E-FACTOR 1100
Dpw 2925
BURST RADIUS 20m

106mm M346A1 HEP

ANTI-ARMOR CLASS D
WT. 17.237 kg
MIN. RANGE 50m
EFF. RANGE 1100m
MAX. RANGE 7700m
E-FACTOR 1000
Dpw 8069
BURST RADIUS 14m

Although an effective round, the HEP round must hit exposed armor plate to inflict damage. Hitting spaced armor, or hitting objects on the hull (racks, cargo, etc.) will detonate the round without causing any internal damage.

106mm XM581 APERS (Antipersonnel)

WT. 18.597 kg
MIN. RANGE 3m
EFF. RANGE 3300m
MAX. RANGE 3300m
E-FACTOR 6 per flechette (1d100 hits)
BURST RADIUS 400x130m cone
FUSE DELAY adjustable by distance

This is a "beehive" round, packed with flechettes (giant needles). Targets caught within the blast radius of the round must roll for 1d100 hits (use the whole body damage tables for the death%). This round is accurate out to over 3 kilometers, and can literally shred personnel in the open. Against targets wearing body armor (ie, MP teams), take 10% of the individual's hits as having hit exposed flesh--head, hands, etc. Note that the flechettes will not penetrate the MP issue Resistweave coveralls, but will end up stuck in the weave. (In other words, MP players will end up looking like porcupines.) This round is a favorite of the Krell gunners.

The 106's are never encountered in the forward part of the army, but are held in reserve. Except when dealing with known MP units or other troubles, 106's in the field have relatively little ammunition handy. (This is not the case back at the Krell base, however).

KRELL 20mm ANTI-TANK RIFLE

CAL, 20mm
WT. 26.5 kg
MIN. RANGE 11m
EFF. RANGE 1500m
MAX. RANGE 7000m
TYPE OF FIRE Semiautomatic
RATE OF FIRE 10 rpm
FEED DEVICE 10 rd magazine

Although Krell has captured a large number of MP caches and boltholes, most MP vehicles were incapacitated or destroyed: the number of 20mm rounds taken far exceeds the number of 20mm autocannons available. For this reason, Krell has equipped his forces with a modern version of the old, WWII 20mm AT rifle. This Krell weapon is semiautomatic, and can be carried and used by one man. For this reason, 20mm AT rifles make up a large portion of the Krell Army, providing heavy individual firepower against a wide variety of targets. Indeed, the weapon is occasionally used like a regular rifle against exposed personnel. A number of these guns have been mounted on light vehicles and provided with 25 rd magazines.

KRELL 20mm AT RIFLE AMMUNITION (CAPTURED MP ISSUE)

20mm M56A1 HEI

ANTI-ARMOR CLASS F
WT. .254 kg
MIN. RANGE 11m
EFF. RANGE 1500m
MAX. RANGE 7000m
E-FACTOR 57
Dpw 11
BURST RADIUS 1m

20mm T221E3 API

ANTI-ARMOR CLASS E
WT. .254 kg
MIN. RANGE 11m
EFF. RANGE 1500M
MAX. RANGE 7000M
E-FACTOR 63
BURST RADIUS .5m

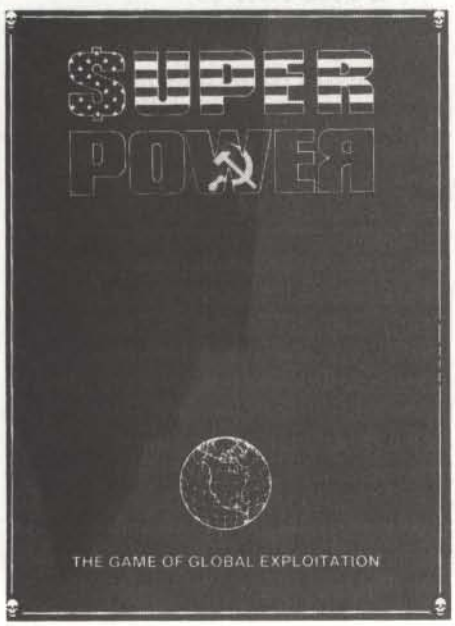
The API round does not contain any explosives; it is a solid slug of hardened steel. Note that both rounds have a Tracer base, and will set fire to any combustible objects they hit.

SPECIAL NOTES: These weapons represent the typical, non-MP firepower that Krell possesses. However, with the exception of the 20mm AT rifles, these weapons do not have a large amount of ammunition available; Krell forces will try not to waste any of it. Also, the weapons themselves are not too common: the larger the caliber, the less chance there is of encountering it in the field.

Interspersed with the older weapons are the more modern weapons of the US Army, and captured MP weapons and gear. Remember that there just is not enough of it to go around in strength yet, so Krell's army is underpowered. However, Quantity, not Quality, is still often the deciding factor in combat; the massed, human-waves attacks can overrun a well-armed MP team. After all, 100 men with rifles and clubs can overwhelm a 5 man team, despite high-tech gear, showy firepower and cocksuredness.

So, the Krell forces are still very deadly; underestimating them can be a fatal mistake, as many teams already knows.

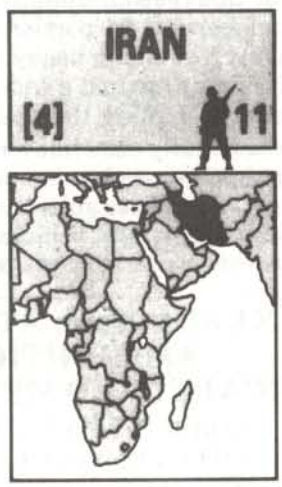
$UPER POWER



Super Power is a strategy game for up to six players. It has simple rules, a puzzle-board map, six sets of detailed plastic counters and three decks of cards (World Opinion, Propaganda and Third World). The map is colorful and ingenious, depicting an abstracted version of the modern world surrounded by a double track, for keeping track of national influence and for player movement. The counters are cast plastic, including player pieces plus tiny tanks, fortresses and coins to represent military influence, military fortifications and economic influence.

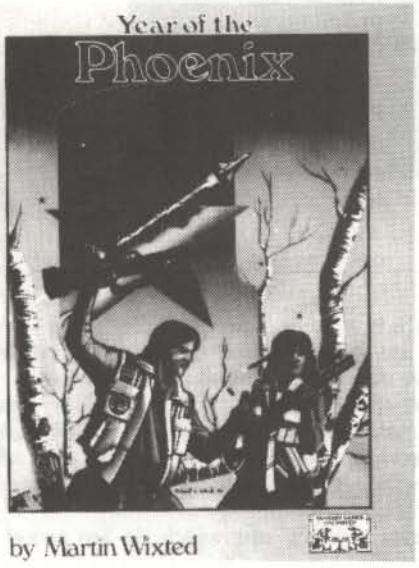
Despite the complex theme Super Power is a very simple game. Players take the roles of international powers establishing influence in four third world areas, the Middle East, Africa, Asia and South America. The goal of the game is to get victory points, which are based on how high you stand in world opinion, how many areas you control and how much economic influence you have. There is a lot to do in the game and if you have the full six players there is a lot of competition for the most desirable areas and plenty for each player to do, though the action tends to bog down a bit towards the end of the game. The mechanics are very inventive, especially the propaganda system and the system for determining how hard each third world nation is to influence. The primary problem with Super Power is that it relies too heavily on dice rolls. Movement is based on how well you roll and unless you roll well you will miss a lot of oportunities and a few missed opportunities can put a player far enough behind that nothing he can do will catch him up. This is essentially a track game and players will get frustrated when they see how little power they have to form strategy and alter the course of the game which is mostly left up to the dice.

Super Power is a cleverly produced and conceived game with a great basic idea, but while the mechanics are inventive and playable, the game falls short in the end because it is so shallow and relies so heavily on die rolls, leaving players feeling powerless and unfulfilled.



SUPER POWER
Designed by
E. Bruce Hollands and Daniel R. McGregor
Published by Games Workshop
Reviewed by
David Walle

Year of the Phoenix



by Martin Wixted

This is not just another space game. The characters are soldiers...members of the United States Space Command. They are part of the warrior elite, trained and dedicated to protect their country's interests in space. The space race is heating up as both the Soviets and the Americans endeavor to complete their space station first!

However, the player's handbook prepares players to play the wrong game! The world to which the players are introduced is not the one in which they find themselves moments into the introductory scenario.

Even though the box clearly spells out this "twist", it is possible for a gamemaster to purchase the game and run it for people who have not read this description. This is the preferred way to experience the game as a player...the less known the better! In this way, the players are as surprised as their characters when things don't seem to be going quite as expected.

The multi-colored box is attractive and most informative. On the back is a complete game premise and a description of all game components: an 80-page Adventure Guide (Gamemaster's Book), 48-page Training Manual (Player's Book), Player Handout (for quick starting play), Gamemaster Screen, 2 pages of full color cardstock vehicle counters, 17"x 22" Combat grid, campaign map, and 6 pregenerated characters and dice.

From the opening section of the Adventure Guide (entitled "What's Going On?"), the referee is guided through the basics of gamemastering, introducing him or her to the colorful world he has chosen as the stage for the player's action-dramas, and explains the game's mechanics simply.

Interspersed with the system explanations are excerpts from writings of this future-world, a short piece of fiction which gives the referee a glimpse of "A Day in the Life" (a citizen's view)' and plenty of helpful hints on how to avoid common pitfalls of inexperienced gamemasters.

The game's systems are a bit number-orientated for my taste but simple. Everything is primarily based on rolling against a perfect chance (100%) of succeeding at any endeavor. This roll is adjusted by the character's talent or training and degree of difficulty of the task. A total of "101" or better indicates success.

Character creation is fun. The "Personal History Generator", a system for fleshing out characters, gives players and gamemaster a starting point for creating a history which ties the character to the world of his or her birth and explains that character's skills. Statistics, called Skill Spheres, are determined by assigning a number of dice to each. This gives the player some chance to emphasize the skill areas he or she prefers.

With about an hour of preparation on my part, I was ready to start running the introductory scenario using the pregenerated characters (which are displayed in a format preferable to the game's standard character sheet). Although the scenario, which can give many sessions of gaming fun, was designed to lead-them-through the-nose a bit too much for my style, I found it easy to adapt into a looser adventure.

All in all, I found the game and its components attractive, easy to read, and well organized. The gamemastering guidelines were instructional and invaluable. The game's initial premise is exciting and the "twist" makes Year of the Phoenix a must for space gamers and patriots.

Year of the Phoenix:
A First Among Roleplaying Games!
Written by
Martin Wixted
Published by
Fantasy Games Unlimited
Reviewed by
Lee McCormick

COMPUTERS IN THE MORROW PROJECT

By Paul Worzel

COMPUTERS IN THE MORROW PROJECT

(We at TimeLine are often criticized for our slowness of production. Partially this slowness is due to our extensive playtesting — we don't playtest a module just once. Partially it is due to the size of our modules — they are longer and contain more information than most other modules on the market today. But mostly it is due to the extensive research we do whenever we write something.

In the case of our latest module, **Prime Base,** *there was extensive research into equipment, design, climate, ecology, geology, group planning and dynamics, psychology, closed environment systems, etc., etc. And we always make sure that the stuff we publish makes sense. We create a history, a detailed description of how things came about, how they work or were supposed to work and what actually happened. In this way we have managed to create a world for The Morrow Project which is consistent and believable. Likewise our time travel role-playing game, Time & Time Again exists in a world which could grow out of our own.*

While it is not necessary to do all of this work, we believe that it produces a higher quality product; one which we are proud to sign our names to and put our logo on.

The following is a description of the Morrow Project Vehicular computer and the remote computer network MORONET along with rules for role-playing computer programming. This is material which was created early on in the writing of Prime Base but because it is of general interest, we decided to publish it here for gamemasters and teams who are not yet ready to take on the challenge of Prime Base.)

The Standard Morrow Project Vehicular Computer

Most Morrow project vehicles have an onboard vehicular computer. The main function of this computer is to provide a sort of portable reference library.

The computer itself is *not* based on ultrahigh technology as equipment which is at the leading edge of technology generally will not survive in the field. As a result the Morrow Project planners used "old-fashioned" but well tested computer equipment. MP vehicles use technology which was current in the early-1980's (that being the date of the last, countrywide Morrow Project equipment update). The main microprocessor chip in all Morrow Project vehicular computers was the Zilog Z-8000.

These chips were used in the cruise missile program so they had been carefully tested in the most difficult of situations. The Morrow planners knew they would not give out in most situations. (A direct hit on the computer is *not* a reasonable situation. The normal wear and tear of being in a vehicle is reasonable and was planned for.)

The computer was given what was a large amount of memory for the time, 256 kilobytes. Theoretically all of this space was available for the Team to use. However, to make use of it the Team will have to do one of two things: they will need to write their own programs or they will have to use available "canned" programs. In both cases some portion of the available memory will be used to run the program.

The computer had neither floppy disks nor Winchester disks as both were too sensitive to motion and dirt. Instead, Morrow Industries developed a special high speed, high density tape system which was better than anything available on the commercial market. While it was expensive to do this, it provided a durable auxiliary storage system for the MPV computer. Each tape is 5 inches wide, 4 inches tall and 1/2 an inch deep. They looked a lot like oversized, heavy-duty cassette tapes.

Each computer is supplied with a "library" of canned programs and information that the Team may find useful as well as a number of blank tapes which the Team can use to write programs and store information. However, the tape system is somewhat slow, and storage is limited to 256 kilobytes per tape.

In general, each vehicle had ten tapes for the computer. Every vehicle which had a computer had two tapes of canned programs available for use with the onboard computer and four tapes with data used by the canned programs. In addition, there were two tapes of utilities used for programming the computer. This left two blank tapes for the Team's use.

The following is a list of programs available for a standard MPV:

UNIX-like Operating System
Word Processor
Spreadsheet
Graphing Program
Database Program (and Database Conversion Program)
Programming Languages:
FORTRAN
'C'
PASCAL

The following information is available for standard MPV (unless otherwise noted, the information is accessed by using the canned Word Processor program):

Local Almanac
Standard Issue MP Equipment Reference Manuals

Each of these information files has a complete Table of Contents and Index file associated with them. By accessing them through the Word Processor, the Team can update the information. By use of the Database Conversion Program the Team can convert these files to a form that the Database program can use in order to allow electronic information search and retrieval. However, if this is done the database cannot be edited using the Word Processor. The first time the database is set up, the Team must "program" it either by using their programming skill to design their own database structure, or by a standard conversion which essentially uses the Table of Contents and the Index as the basis for an electronic lookup system.

The information in these files is dated 1980 or earlier. The almanac is roughly the equivalent of what you might find in an ordinary printed almanac (in other words, raw statistics and facts with no "speculative" information, typical would be population, town and city information, climate data, etc.).

The Morrow Project Equipment Reference Manuals are what they say: reference manuals for MP equipment available to the Team. These are not how-to-use/do-it manuals. They assume you know the basics of the equipment. Instead, they have details which would only be useful to an experienced operator performing maintenance and repair on the equipment.

Operating The Vehicular Computer

To use the MPV computer, you must turn the computer on and insert an MPID into a slot below the computer screen. The system will check to see whether the correct program tape is inserted. If it is not, the message: **INSERT OPERATING SYSTEM MASTER TAPE** will appear on the computer screen. Inserting a tape is very much like putting a tape into a cassette player: you simply push the "Eject" button to open the tape drive, insert the cassette and manually close the drive.

Once the tape is inserted, or if it was in place before the computer was turned on, the system will bring up a list of canned programs with a number to the left of each entry. The user can choose from this list by entering the appropriate number on the keyboard. The computer will then load this program into memory and start it up.

Once the program in question is loaded, you can put in one of the information tapes in place of the program tape. Again, a list of files which are usable by the program will appear on the screen with a number beside each one. Punching the appropriate number will open this file for use by the program and the appropriate information will appear on the screen.

When you are finished with the computer, you simply type **QUIT**, eject the tape and shut the system off. If you have made any changes to the information, after you type **QUIT** the system will ask if you want to save the information. Typing **SAVE** will save all changes, typing **CLEAR** will close the file without saving the information. Typically saving the information will take several minutes, no matter how small the changes were.

Programming Morrow Project Computers

While all MP personnel are trained to use the canned programs and files, no one who has not had some experience programming the MPV computers can expect to program them successfully. All MP personnel who have Computer Science as a degree skill (see **The Morrow Project Role Playing Expansion** available in the 3rd Edition MPGB and the supplement GA-2 **Personal and Vehicular Basic Loads**) will have been given training in programming the MPV computer.

This does *not* mean they can automatically create working programs, even with a successful skill roll. As anyone who has tried to write a program knows, creating a working program is a long, difficult process.

Roughly speaking, most programs have the following stages of creation:

Conception
Specification
Design
Programming
Debugging
Documentation

To create a successful program, a character should roll for each of these steps. They *cannot* go on to the next until they have successfully completed the step they are working on.

In addition, debugging a program has two distinct phases: getting the program to compile (i.e., making sure the computer has been given a set of acceptable instructions) and making sure that what you have told the computer to do is what you *really want it to do!* Both of these must be rolled for separately. If the attempted roll for making sure it does what you want it to do fails and is over 95% (i.e., the roll was badly blown), then the approach taken is completely wrong and the programmer must go back to the design stage and try again.

P.D. NOTE: The amount of time which must be spent on each step depends on the difficulty of the program being attempted. The P.D. must attempt to estimate the difficulty and assign a time factor for each step. In general, it is more accurate for it to take more time than less. A simple program will take at least a day per step. A moderate one, a week per step. An exceedingly difficult one can easily take six months per step. As a good rule

of thumb, the more it takes for the player to explain the program so that everyone understands what it will do, the longer it will take to create.

The steps listed above are not *all* strictly necessary. In particular, the specification, design and documentation steps can be omitted. However, if this is done, the following restrictions apply:

1. Programmers who omit the specification or design stages must make an additional roll in each subsequent stage for each of the steps omitted. If they fail, then they have either failed to produce what was desired or they have worked with a faulty design and must either go back to the appropriate step and try again, or may try again with the same restriction.

2. Programmers who omit the documentation stage but successfully finish the debugging step have a complete program which only they can use. They can personally train others in its use, but to do this they must successfully roll their Computer Science skill on a D100. However, if the program created is not documented, then the programmer will be in danger of forgetting how it works. In this case the programmer must make a roll equal to his Computer Science skill less 5% for each month since he last used it. Likewise, if the program is not documented, then the programmer will be less likely to be able to remember how it works and if he wants to change it, he must roll his Computer Science skill less 10% for each month since he last worked on it to see if he remembers how it was designed.

Example: Peter Programmer decides he wants to write a program which will search through the MP Equipment Files and create a cross-reference list (i.e.,. what equipment is referenced in each section). Peter further decides that since he has a 70% skill level, he can skip the design and documentation stages.

The Project Director decides the task is medium difficult and thus determines that Peter needs a week per step. Making separate rolls of 27 and 65 for the conception and specification steps, Peter has taken two weeks to get to the programming stage. He writes his program successfully with a roll of 43 and compiles it with a roll of 56. At this point he has spent four weeks on the project. However, at the end of the 5th week, while in the second debugging phase, he rolls an 85 and realizes that his way just won't work.

He now has the option of trying to redesign on the spot, or returning to the design stage and going from there. Peter decides not to try any more shortcuts, returns to the design stage and through diligent work, has a working program in 5 more weeks. Being by this time very tired of this program, he does not document it and three months later, he must roll a 55 or less to remember how it works so that he can explain its use to Joe Recon.

To change the program he will need to roll a 40 or less before he remembers what he was trying to do and then he must go through the same six steps to revise the program.

P.D. Note: The above rules apply to programming all of the standard computers at Prime Base. However, there is an initial learning period of about a month before a character with a computer science degree skill would be familiar enough with a specific system to begin to program it. In the case of some of the unusual systems within the Base, no one would be able use them unless they had a lot of time to work on the problem (about a year) and they had the documentation available.

The Morrow Online Network (MORONET)

Communications between Morrow teams was considered vital by the Morrow Project planners. The MORONET system was designed to be a flexible remote network of variable bandwidth. This would allow a variable number of Morrow vehicles to communicate differing amounts of information both with Prime Base and with other Morrow teams via the MPV onboard computer.

The key to this computer network is the communications links between Prime Base and the rest of the country (and the rest of the world). Prime Base has the computer capacity to receive and handle up to 10,000 real-time requests simultaneously. The limiting factors in the network are the number of communications links, the amount of information which can be transferred over these links and, most importantly, the technical know-how to build and maintain the communications equipment.

The initial communication with Morrow Project teams would be by radio. No computer linkups were anticipated at this stage of the Project.

The communication satellite described in PF-06 **Operation Lonestar** would be the first high volume datalink to the Morrow team in the field. Once this was established, either from the Johnson Space Center or from one of the backup sites, the Project teams would be able to access the databases and computers of Prime Base but without the ability for high volume, high speed transfers typical of fullblown computer networks.

As pre-War equipment was salvaged and repaired, microwave relay stations were expected to be put back in working order by the Teams. These would provide the first high volume information links to Prime Base as they extended back to the Prime Base area and this would allow MORONET to begin operation in its true capacity. The areas serviced by MORONET would be strictly limited to those areas where microwave links were complete through to Prime Base. In addition, because of the high precision needed for such transmissions, only vehicles tied into a resupply base could make full use of the information available at Prime Base and only after the communications link was established.

The final level of communication envisioned by MORONET was planned after coast-to-coast phone communications were reestablished. It was estimated by the Morrow planners that this stage would be reached approximately 15-20 years after the War. However, beacuse of the destruction of Prime Base, neither the communications lines nor (more importantly) the expertise to get them up and running still exist. As a result, it is not likely that this level of communications will be reached in less than 50 years after the reconstruction of Prime Base.

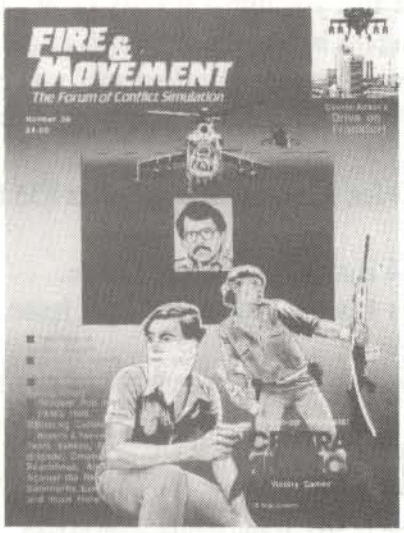
Once reached, this final level allows complete computer networking along with videotext and television transmission for those stations able to make use of them. The computer link provides direct access to Morrow datafiles, including pictures, audio recordings and an interactive communication network with other network members which allows the direct exchange of large volumes of information.

This is the Adventure!

With the coming together of 3W and DTI (see Editorial, page 2), we are creating a hobby powerhouse in the west. 3W already has a reputation for publishing first class magazines *on schedule,* and our resources and expertise will now be applied to *Fire & Movement, Space Gamer*, and *Battleplan*. Over the last twelve months we have recreated a sense of excitement among readers of *Strategy & Tactics*, an excitement that recalls the halcyon days of SPI. We intend to do the same now for DTI's three magazines. Additionally, we be publishing a brand new line of top flight war games, and a challenging line of sports games. And later this year we anticipate establishing a role playing division.

We are excited about these plans, and hope you are too. You can both add to your enjoyment of the hobby, and support our plans, by taking out subscriptions to our magazines. We hope each and every one of you will take out a subscription to at least one magazine (preferably more!). To encourage this, we are offering you subscriptions at a special reduced rate, for a limited period. Subscribe by September 5th and you can receive the magazines of your choice for little more than half the retail cost. (Existing subscribers can also take advantage of these offers). Enjoy.

Important Note: As magazine publishers we have to have both a solid subscriber base *and* healthy retail sales. So don't forget to check out the wide range of magazines at your local game store. Your retailer needs support too.



Fire & Movement

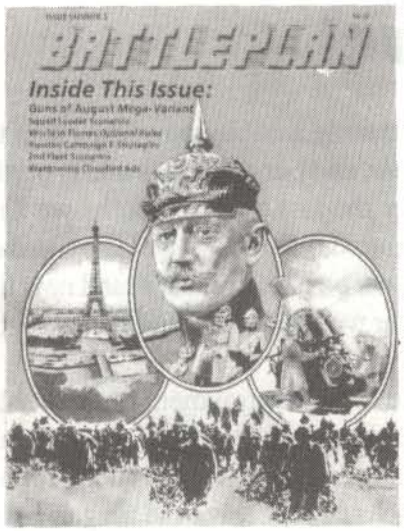
F&M is different. It has a special place in the history of the hobby. Now imagine an *F&M* recapturing its award-winning quality. In-depth analysis, thoughtful pieces on design philosophy, behind-the-scenes hobby news, PLUS...*timely reviews*. Yes, from now on *F&M* will appear *absolutely on time, every time*. And we will bring you reviews and previews of games, as, or even a little before, they appear.

Usual subscription: $20 for 6 issues. Special offer, $14 for 6 issues.

Space Gamer

Space Gamer is to be the flagship of our role-playing division. As such, it is our aim to make *Space Gamer* the premier role-playing magazine in the hobby. In addition to the magazine's own original material, we anticipate bringing you *previews* of many new role-playing modules. Later this year we plan to increase the magazine to 64 pages (yes, the price will go up), and introduce some unique features. Help us to create something very special, by taking out a 6 issue subscription NOW. Usual subscription rate: $18 for 6 issues. Special offer $12 for 6 issues.

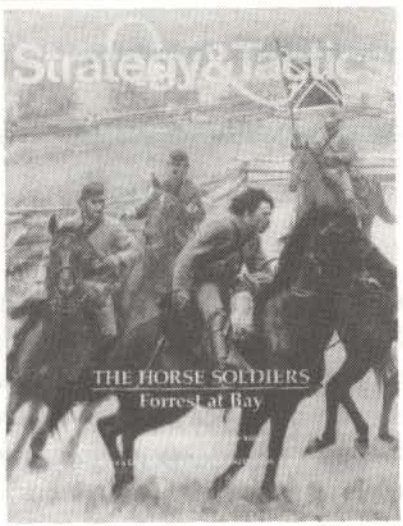
Battleplan



Battleplan has already established a reputation as an exciting publication with a fast growing circulation. Future issues will include at least one REPLAY of a new variant: a blow-by-blow account and analysis of how the game plays. We will be including variants or scenarios for *every single* new board wargame published, as well as for old favorites. And from time to time we will be including a special mini-game (#7 will have Erich Faust's *Zulu War*). Our aim is to make *Battleplan* THE indispensable hobby companion. (Oh yes! It'll be printed on decent paper too!)

Usual subscription rate: $20 for 6 issues: Special offer $14 for 6 issues.

Strategy & Tactics



What can we say about *S&T* that you don't already know? It's exciting, its games are among the best in the hobby, its graphics are state of the art. And now, with the new flexi-sub, you can choose just those issues that most interest you (see details below).

Usual subscription rate: $40 for 8 issues. Special offer $35 for 8 issues.

Usual flexi-sub (minimum 4 issues) rate: $6 per issue.

Special flexi-sub (minimum 4 issues) rate: $5.50 per issue.

S&T FLEXI-SUBS

Below you will find listed games that are in the pipeline and scheduled to appear in *S&T*. If you simply want to take out a regular 8-issue subscription, that's fine. But if you'd like to pick and choose the games you'll receive, you can do that too. Simply check the boxes against the appropriate games, and you will receive these – and only these. Even if we have to alter the order of their appearance, as occasionally happens, it will make no difference – you are ordering specific *games*, not specific issues, and you will only receive those you order. You may include back issues of either S&T or The Wargamer. And a FLEXI-SUB entitles you to all privileges and sicounts available to regular subscribers.

CODE ✔ **COMPLEXITY 1 = Introductory; 2 = Substantial Game, but quick-playing with relatively straightforward mechanics; 3 = Average Complexity; 4 = Above Average Complexity; 5 = Highly Complex and Time-comsuming.**

NC ☐ **NICARAGUA** An in-depth study of modern (i.e. guerrilla) warfare, in which the critical balance between military and political factors is brought out. Area movement, battalion-company level, quarterly turns. Designed by John Burtt (editor of *Counterattack* magazine and a Vietnam marine vet) and Joseph Miranda (formerly Psychological Operations Officer at the U.S. Army's Special Warfare Center and School). This game is unlike any other you have ever played. **COMPLEXITY 3**

IM ☐ **THE INDIAN MUTINY** A simulation of the bloody Sepoy rebellion of 1857, that shook the British Empire to its core. The map covers the northern and central areas of India where the majority of the fighting took place. Rules cover mutiny by Indian Army units, player initiative, provincial revolts, rail movement, sieges, attrition, British civilian population (save them or slaughter them), etc. Designers Mark Seaman and Bob Markham (credits: *Rise of the House of S'aud*, *Raid on St. Nazaire* (AH)). **COMPLEXITY 2**

PB ☐ **PEGASUS BRIDGE** British airborne commando attack on two bridges over the Orne River and Orne River Canal, guarding the left flank of the D-Day landings. Point-to-Point movement, battalion/company level, individual armored vehicles, a multi-scenario game with variable German set-up and reinforcements. Designers Mark Seaman and Bob Markham. **COMPLEXITY 2-3**

3W Back Issues

S&T BACK ISSUES

#103 THE ROAD TO VICKSBURG
#105 RUWEISAT RIDGE
#106 THE BATTLE OF PLEASANT HILL
#107 WARSAW RISING
#108 REMEMBER THE MAINE!
#109 TARGET: LIBYA
#110 HASTINGS, 1066
#111 KOREA: THE MOBILE WAR
#113 NAPOLEON & CHARLES—ABENSBERG
#114 NAPOLEON & CHARLES—ECKMÜHL
#115 KANEV
#116 MANCHU
#117 NORTH GERMAN PLAIN
#118 THE TIGERS ARE BURNING
#119 THE HORSE SOLDIERS

THE WARGAMER BACK ISSUES

#26 RACE TO THE MEUSE
#27 PETER THE GREAT
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CV ☐ **CAMPAIGNS IN THE VALLEY** Originally intended to be published as two games, *Jackson in the Valley* and *Sheridan in the Valley*, the game covers both Jackson's brilliant campaigns earlier in the war and Sheridan's Valley campaign of 1864. Fast moving, playable and instructive simulations for the Civil War buff. Designers Mark Seaman and Bob Markham. **COMPLEXITY 2**

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DF ☐ **DONAU FRONT** The final game in the *Central Front* series, the "Ardennes of the 1990's." Ties in with the earlier *Hof Gap*, to form the southernmost of the *Central Front* series. The game portrays an invasion by 14 Soviet and Czech divisions through the rugged and wooded terrain of Bavaria. The Soviets are opposed by the West German II Corps, reinforced by the French II Corps and elements of the French Rapid Action Force, including both an airborne and a parachute division. Scale 4km per hex, with each day divided into two 6-hour turns and one 12-hour (night) turn. Designer Chuck Kamps. **COMPLEXITY 3**

CW ☐ **THE CHACO WAR** Regimental simulation of the three year war between Bolivia and Paraguay, 1932 – 35. Scale is 15km to the hex, two weeks per turn. Rules cover armor and air combat, supply – including air supply, rail movement, weather, water (the Chaco region is very barren), fortifications, engineers, etc. A neglected subject. Designer Bruce Farceau. **COMPLEXITY 2**

FS ☐ **FORTRESS STALINGRAD** Covers the period November 1942 – March 1943, and thus includes both the Soviet offensive and Manstein's counter-offensive. Map scale 25km to the hex, covering from Krasnodar in the south to Kursk in the north, and from Dnepropetrovsk in the west to Stalingrad in the east. Soviet units are armies, Germans corps and a handful of divisions. A highly fluid game which uses a system similar to that in *The Tigers are Burning!* Designer Ty Bomba (credits: *End of the Iron Dream, Operation Dynamo*). **COMPLEXITY 2**

EA ☐ **EAST AFRICA** Game covers the campaign in East Africa during World War II, and is compatible with GDW's *Europa* series, with which it can be linked. Scale is 32 miles to the hex. 240 counters, 34" x 22" map. **COMPLEXITY 4**

ND ☐ **NAPOLEON AT DRESDEN** The next game in the *Bonaparte* series. A single corps under St. Cyr attempts to gain time for Napoleon to arrive and deploy, in the face of Russian, Prussian and Austrian armies. A three day battle featuring multiple terrain types, city fighting, critical command control, and the important effects of the downpour on the second day – which effectively cut the battlefield in three parts linked only tenuously by a handful of bridges. Designer Keith Poulter (credits: *Napoleon at Austerlitz, Napoleon & Charles: Aspern-Essling, Abensberg and Eckmühl, Clash of Steel, etc*). **COMPLEXITY 3**

RB ☐ **RED BEACH ONE** A solo game of the marine invasion of Tarawa. Sequence of play is: initial phase, operations, landing phase, supply, naval bombardment and air strikes, Japanese anti-boat fire, ground impulses, terminal phase, Japanese reaction fire, final American command segment. Rules cover landings, sniper fire, assembly and dispersal, officers, heroes, special terrain (e.g. the sea wall, anti-tank ditches), radio, etc. One of the bloodiest struggles of the Pacific war. Designer Mike Joslyn (credits: *First Team Vietnam*). **COMPLEXITY 2-3**

BW ☐ **THE BOER WAR** Covers the war of 1899 – 1902 in monthly turns. Starts out as a conventional war of the period and swiftly becomes a classic guerrilla war. All the major leaders are represented. Lots of chrome including Boer evasion, armored trains, etc., etc. 34" x 22" map, 200 counters. Designers Erich Faust and Lew Fisher (credits: Duel in the Desert). **COMPLEXITY 2**

RR ☐ **RACE FOR ROME** The initial Allied landings and early campaign in Italy, Sept. – Nov. 1943. Essentially a multi-choice invasion game, the scale is 11km to the hex, with regimental/battalion units, and 4-day game turns. Game features tactical and strategic air and naval units, and an inset map of the Rome area at 5km to the hex. Designer Vance von Borries (credits: *Decision at Kasserine, Remember the Maine, Invasion Malta, Patton Goes to War, Rommel at Bay, O'Connor's Offensive*, and *Hellfire Pass*). **COMPLEXITY 3**

ZP ☐ **ZEPPELIN** A tactical/operational game of the naval-air war over the North Sea during the First World War. Scale 18 miles to the hex, with a tactical map on which action within a single hex on the main map is played out. Each turn represents one hour, altitude is in increments of 100 feet. Counters represent individual aircraft or airships. The German player has 4 types of airships, 7 types of sea planes and 4 types of land planes. The British have a single type of sea plane, 8 types of land planes, and 2 types of flying boats. Nine scenarios cover the war from early 1916 to late 1918, and include bombing raids, attacks on shipping, engaging other aircraft, etc., etc. Counter-mix includes the world's first crude aircraft carrier. Designer Bill Koff. **COMPLEXITY 2**

BC ☐ **BASTOGNE: CROSSROADS OF THE ARDENNES** This is a game of the siege of Bastogne. Scale is 600 meters to the hex, with battalion-level units, and 18 half-day turns covering the period 18 – 26 December 1944. The Germans are attacking in the first half of the game, the Americans in the second half. The most accurate OB yet. Designers Erich Faust and Lew Fisher, with additional input from Danny Parker and Jon Southard. **COMPLEXITY 3**

DM ☐ **DRIVE ON MOSCOW** Strategic game of the Swedish invasion of Russia, 1708 – 1709, during the Great Northern War. Scale 48km to the hex, monthly game turns. Leaders and army and navy strength points. Random events include uprisings, plague, and unusually severe weather. Rules cover guerrillas, supply, fortresses, sieges, devastation of provinces. 22" x 22" map, covering from West Prussia to Moscow, 300 counters. Designer Peter Englund (credits: Peter the Great). **COMPLEXITY 2**

OT ☐ **OBJECTIVE TUNIS** Next in the *Battles for North Africa* series. Scale 2 miles per hex, battalion/company level units, 12 hour turns. Covers the follow up to the Torch landings, when the Allies were in a desperate race to take Tunis and trap Rommel, before the Germans could reinforce the area. This will be the last independent game set during the Tunisian campaign; a later publication will link all the games together. Designer Vance von Borries. **COMPLEXITY 3-4**

Note that the first nine games listed above will almost certainly appear in the order shown; the order of appearance of the remainder is less certain.

Mix and Match

by
Marcus L. Rowland

Bored? Depressed? Can't think of any new scenario ideas? Why not try a miracle cure, guaranteed to give those old ideas a new lease on life and keep your players guessing.

This new miracle of modern technology is the recycled plot, refreshed and made sparkling new by the fact that your starting point is taken from another type of game, film or book. Often the changes involved in conversion to a new genre will breathe new life into a tired theme.

There are many commercially-available adventures based on this type of genre crossing. For example, a well-known Traveller adventure bears a striking similarity to an AD&D dungeon-bashing scenario, but adds an additional challenge (the characters are trapped, and their vacuum suits are gradually disintegrating in a hostile atmosphere) to give the players a better motive than the normal looting expedition. Game magazines have often featured SF and Fantasy crime scenarios, elaborate capers derived from the literature of the underworld. There have even been a few fantasy romances, adventures in which the players are involved in love triangles, elopements, and other heart-rending themes. These themes expose players to a whole new range of problems, and can give the referee a lot of fun; for example, imagine the reactions of a group of hardened mercenaries who gradually learn that they've somehow strayed into a romantic comedy or supernatural thriller.

The most important aspect of this type of adventure is that the referee should NOT reveal that a change of pace is imminent. For example, it would be a mistake to tell players running characters

designed for Traveller that they were about to take part in a Call of Cthulhu scenario. Conversion of player character statistics to a different game system should also be avoided; at first sight it's much harder work to convert an entire scenario to another system, but this difficulty is illusory, since the conversion need only be approximate. A big tough monster in one system becomes a big tough monster in the new system; provided it's difficult to kill, exact statistics aren't too important.

Conversion to an unexpected type of genre can solve many problems. It's common for the game system used to give a lot of clues about the type of adventure to be expected; for example, Call of Cthulhu players are usually prepared to encounter supernatural manifestations, James Bond RPG players expect to be sent on espionage missions in exotic locations, and Doctor Who RPG players can anticipate encounters with Daleks, Cybermen, and other familiar foes. An essential element of surprise is lacking. The interesting point about these three examples is that the average player character in all three games is a more or less normal human; there's really nothing to stop the referee borrowing a plot from one and using it in another. For example;

The three occult investigators carefully descended the cellar steps of the ruined manor, trembling as they anticipated the evil that might lie ahead. In the year since they first learned of the Cthulhu Mythos four friends had died, and another two were confined to asylums. Only their trusty chauffeur Bates remained. Now another challenge lay ahead. Villagers spoke of strange lights after midnight, and strange sounds from the sky. Three local youths had vanished, and no-one was prepared to enter the house and look for them.

Ahead was another door, surprisingly clean. Through it came a faint hum, and a baleful blue glow could be seen at the cracks. Fearfully, they pushed it open to reveal a huge cellar, spotlessly clean and illuminated by a sourceless actinic light. It was some sort of laboratory, and strange machines stood around the walls and floor. In a far corner was a huddled mound, resembling a human body.

Nervously they entered the room. Abruptly two conical machines rotated towards them, and a strange metallic voice said "Intruders! Destroy! Destroy!"

In this case the referee has decided to start running a Doctor Who campaign, and has converted a Doctor Who adventure to Call of Cthulhu rules. After this episode the survivors will join the Doctor, and statistics can be converted to the new system. If the referee wanted to stay with the Cthulhu Mythos it would be advisable to find some way of linking the Daleks to the Mythos: to avoid unnecessary complications, such as the introduction of time travel, the Doctor should not be used.

When introducing this type of unexpected encounter, the referee should take care to give the players a few escape routes: for instance, in the above example the Daleks might choose to capture the adventurers, rather than killing them, with Bates remaining free to organise a rescue. Meanwhile the Daleks program them to obey their will: the

SAN loss involved in Dalek brainwashing is left to any interested Keeper's discretion.

If you're basing your adventure on a book or film, rather than an adventure for another system, more work is needed and it's not a good idea to stick too close to the original plot. It's more fun to throw in ideas from several sources, combining them to form a variant theme that will challenge your players and make them wonder what's happening. There are lots of plot ideas around, and they can be the basis of exciting adventures if your players can't identify their sources.

An excellent example of this type of surprise adventure is Big Lizzy by W.G. Armintrout, a Western scenario that appeared in Space Gamer magazine in 1983. It begins as a normal Western adventure, but suddenly plunges the adventurers into another world, an alien wildlife park infested with dinosaurs. Derived from the film Valley of Gwangi, it's one of the few Western scenarios to have appeared in any game magazine.

As the first step of any adaptation, the referee should jot down the main themes involved, then see how they can be resolved. Sometimes the plot must be obscured; something that's hidden from the characters in a film might be glaringly obvious in the context of an RPG. It's tempting to turn familiar characters into NPC's, but this should be avoided, since it's likely that someone will recognize the character and realize what's going on. Unless all your players are rules lawyers, conversion of statistics and rules should be secondary to the basic details of plot and characterization.

The remainder of this article consists of two short scenario outlines, derived from well-known films. Each has been re-written for an apparently inappropriate type of game system; fine tuning and the addition of appropriate character statistics and details are left for the referee. I've also added a few additional film sources for

conversion to adventures.

Chosen of the Gods

System: Any space travel game, eg Traveller, Star Trek, Space Opera, Star Frontiers, etc.
Source: Q The Winged Serpent

Players Information:

A survey mission is tracing lost human colonies on the fringes of known space. Three weeks ago the ship discovered the planet Tak, which apparently regressed to a primitive state and is now roughly on a par with twentieth-century Earth. All TV and radio broadcasts picked up suggest that the colonists have forgotten their origin. It's illegal to interfere with such a primitive culture, or give the colonists any indication that more advanced civilizations exist.

Last week a group of anthropologists made a secret landing, disguised and wearing native clothing. They intended to pose as foreigners from another part of the planet, and visit museums in Y'kurth, one of the larger cities. Since the natives have radio it wasn't possible to keep in continuous contact; none of the scientists returned to a pick-up point at the agreed time.

Most of the remaining personnel on the mother ship are specialist technicians, essential crew, or otherwise unavailable to investigate the disappearance. To put it bluntly, the team is expendable; the ship can get home without them. They will be given hypnotic language briefings, complete with cover stories, disguises, and technologically appropriate weapons; their mission is to find the anthropologists and bring them back without arousing the natives.

Referee's Information

Weapons provided will be small easily-concealed handguns, not rifles, machine pistols, etc. The language briefing is naturally limited to the topics covered by native TV and radio transmissions. Several themes are omitted, but the players should not be told this until they try to utilize their knowledge. In particular, there are no references to religion. Three NPCs join the party; an anthropologist who was omitted from the original team, the fiance of one of the missing scientists, and a security guard.

The team are to land (or beam down) in an uninhabited coastal area, and work their way across country to Y'Kurth. Arrange a few diversions (such as some interesting ruins) to split the party up. Soon the anthropologist becomes separated from the team; suddenly they hear a shot or two, but find nothing but a severed hand holding a bloodstained gun when they go to investigate. The native TV transmissions haven't revealed that there is a planet-wide religion, involving human sacrifice and the worship of huge carnivorous flying lizards. The matter is considered too sacred for normal TV coverage; only major rituals are televised, and the ship hasn't been around long enough to see one. The cities resemble those of 20th Century Earth, but a few of the skyscrapers in each city are topped by conical structures providing ideal accommodation for the reptiles. These creatures come and go as they please. They are extremely fast, immensely strong, almost bullet-proof, and well-camouflaged, and will only be seen a fraction of a second before they

strike, though they register on radar, tricorders, etc., if anyone uses these aids quickly enough. The bulk of their food is provided by volunteer human sacrifices, supplemented by condemned criminals, at rooftop temples, but they also snatch people from rooftops and the streets. These losses, comparable in number to road accidents or crime victims, are ignored by the natives; anyone taken is venerated as the "chosen of the gods". Naturally it's grave heresy to attempt to harm the "gods" in any way.

The missing scientists visited one of the temples. One accidentally entered an area used by volunteer sacrifices, and was snatched by a "god". The others tried to rescue him, and were attacked by guards, who are armed with spears; their normal duty is to kill anyone who is mutilated rather than killed. In the ensuing fight three anthropologists died, the two survivors are being held in the temple, for sacrifice at a major ritual to be held in four days time. Their behaviour is considered a matter of shame, a profanation of a sacred shrine. Needless to say all their heretical equipment (eg guns, radios) has been destroyed.

Obviously these details shouldn't immediately become apparent; use a few incidents (a bloody shoe falls from the sky and is ignored by passers-by, an overheard conversation in which someone says that he will "give himself to the gods" if he fails his examinations, etc.) to gradually reveal the situation. Naturally the natives don't discuss such sacred matters in casual conversation.

As a final twist, the "gods" are as intelligent as humans. They originally intended to let the first colonists settle peacefully, but retaliated after hunters attacked them, destroying most of the colonists' equipment. The current situation is a form of domestication; the "gods" see the cities as convenient food supplies, much handier than looking for wild prey, which gives them more time for relaxation, philosophy, and other mental disciplines. Many members of the species see this as decadence and stay in the wilds, but will still take humans if they are hungry, as in the incident after landing. The events at the temple are seen as a sign that the humans may be becoming dangerous again; if there is any repetition (for example, if the team harm a "god" while attempting to rescue the anthropologists) they will destroy the cities and kill most of the humans.

The Apocalypse Assignment

System: James Bond, Top Secret, Espionage, MSPE, etc.
Source: Omen 3 - The Final Conflict

Players Information

Yesterday the American President arrived in Britain for a conference with the British Prime Minister and other NATO heads of state at Chequers. He is staying at the US Ambassador's country mansion.

The team are to work as liason between British and American security units, and have been authorized to carry weapons on UK soil.

While making plans for this operation, they are summoned to New Scotland Yard, and informed that an intruder has been caught trying to break into the Ambassador's mansion, and is being held at the local police station.

Referee's Information

When the team reach the police station they'll find that the prisoner has escaped, killing two constables and one of the security men from the mansion. Survivors (all badly injured) will report that the man wouldn't speak, and went berserk when he saw a copy of The Times (which has a picture of the President on its front page). An identikit picture looks vaguely like a bald version of Oddjob, from the James Bond film Goldfinger (if you're using the James Bond game say that he looks a bit like Oddjob, without mentioning the film).

Three months ago a vision appeared to members of a obscure order of Tibetan monks. It told them that a demon had broken free from the underworld, and taken human form as the American President. They must kill the demon, or the world will be destroyed. Seven monks followed these commands, crossing the border to India, learning the President's travel plans, then selling gems to pay for a flight to Britain.

The KGB spent several years perfecting the hologram projector used for the vision, and all the monks are utterly convinced of its authenticity. The Russians plan to cause an international incident, and a deterioration in US-Chinese relations.

The monks have sworn vows of silence. They wear badly-fitting British suits, and carry an assortment of throwing knives, shirikin, and other Oriental weapons, with rifles and explosives in their transport (a battered old mini-bus). All have shaved heads and thick moustaches; they are all related, since the monastery is in a small village, and the team may think that they are dealing with brothers or clones. They are proficient martial artists, but don't belong to any of the recognized "schools" of combat. Each monk should be a match for three or four average police or security guards, or at least two player characters. They should each have one or two weapon specialities; one might be extraordinarily good with swords and a bow, another an expert rifle shot. At least one of the monks should be able to drive, though not particularly well.

The remainder of this adventure should be a hunt for the assassin, and the team's gradual realization that several men are involved, climaxing in a prolonged chase and martial arts battle as the assassins try to reach the President.

Scopomaline injections and a linguistically skilled interrogator can reveal the monk's story. Follow-up missions can track the assassins back to Tibet, reveal the Russian involvement, and possibly add a mission to capture the hologram projector and the scientists who built it.

Optionally, ruthless referees might wish to run this scenario slightly differently; the vision was genuine, and the US President is really a demon! As the assassins make their attempts they should die in a series of unlikely "accidents".

For example, an assassin tries to get into the mansion by climbing a tree, intending to drop over the perimeter fence; a patrol car skids off the road and ploughs into the tree, and the assassin is thrown through the wire and impaled on a support post. The team should gradually realize that something strange is happening. The final revelation might be a dying statement from the last monk, or another vision.

Once the team are aware of the facts, they should realize that the President's recent actions seem planned to worsen the international situation, and might easily lead to nuclear war. They must then decide whether to do nothing, or try to remove him from office themselves. Naturally, any assault on the President should be extremely difficult to kill; bullets will probably be useless. Exact details are left to the referee, who should decide whether this is simply a minor demon, and vulnerable to holy water or exorcism, or something much more formidable. Use of the Antichrist and/or Second Coming is not recommended for campaign play; whichever side wins the final conflict, there probably won't be much of a future for secret agents!

Further Sources

The following films are recommended as useful sources for conversion to role playing adventures.

Source-Recommended Systems

The Terminator-Call of Cthulhu, Chill, etc.
Ice Station Zebra-Traveller, Space Opera, etc.
The Thing From Another World-James Bond, Top Secret, etc.
Alien-Judge Dredd, Call of Cthulhu, Doctor Who, etc.
Sleeper-Paranoia, Judge Dredd, etc.
The Italian Job-Toon, Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles, etc.

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Return of Werdna

Preview/Profile
by
Robbie Robberson

After what has seemed to be a lifetime of waiting, amid rumors and denials, Sir-Tech Software finally has announced the release of the fourth scenario in its popular Wizardry computer role-playing game: **The Return of Werdna.** Due for release in September/October, Space Gamer/Fantasy Gamer had the privilige of getting a sneak preview of what should be this year's best game in fantasy simulation, with a guided tour by Werdna's designers, Roe Adams and Robert Woodhead.

Robert Woodhead, for those who aren't **Wizardry** fans, is the original designer and programmer of the **Proving Grounds,** the first scenario, the man who created the most intriguing world to be explored by people at a keyboard. Roe Adams, a new face to Wizardry players, is no newcomer to the fantasy role-playing world, with credits for the **Legacy of Llylgamyn** manual, as well as design work on **Ultima IV** and **Bard's Tale I.**

The basic premise for **The Return of Werdna** is that unknown to those intrepid adventurers who returned Trebor's amulet in the first scenario, they did not really destroy the body of Werdna. The evil wizard has, in actuality, confined to the bottom of a magically protected dungeon. Upon awakening, you (that's right, you're Werdna in this game) find your amulet gone you are alone without spells or weapons in the dark. Thus, it is your goal to escape, retrieve your amulet, and defeat your enemies.

As Woodhead booted up the beta-test version in the SF/FG's offices. Adams spoke enthustiastically of **Werdna.** This game is not like any other game on the market, and he claimed that it will avoid the problem that plagues most of the popular role-playing games: what to do with high-level characters who no longer are challenged by the dungeon and its inhabitants. In **Werdna,** Adams explained, there are no experience points to hand out for combat. Now all that is required for a player to do is to conquer the level he is currently on in three ways.

The first way is the traditional "hack'n slash" with the "monsters" (more on those later) who dwell there. There is no longer the element of random monsters; each level has a prescribed number of monsters, who, once killed, do not come back. Adams, with a little grin, said that players cannot count on building superhero characters by wiping out the easy monsters over and over. Once they "outgrow" the level, they'll have to move on to bigger and better things.

The second way to conquer the level is to solve the puzzles that are sprinkled throughout the dungeon. These get progressively harder the farther you go in and will require some serious thinking to solve. For those who think they will never get off the first level, Adams and Woolhead have designed the game with built-in-hints in several forms, including a "travelling" oracle, which, if you are lucky enough to catch, can provide some help. If you are still stuck, Sir-Tech will be providing a hot-line that promises no answers, but certainly encouragement and pointed hints.

The third way to conquer the level is, as should be familiar to all veteran explorers, mapping. It will prove just as important in this game, since there is no guarantee that all levels will be constructed alike. Adams, in our talk, alluded to one level as being three-dimensional in nature, and another level where, if you aren't careful, will keep you eternally wandering since the rooms on the level can randomly spin, changing your direction!

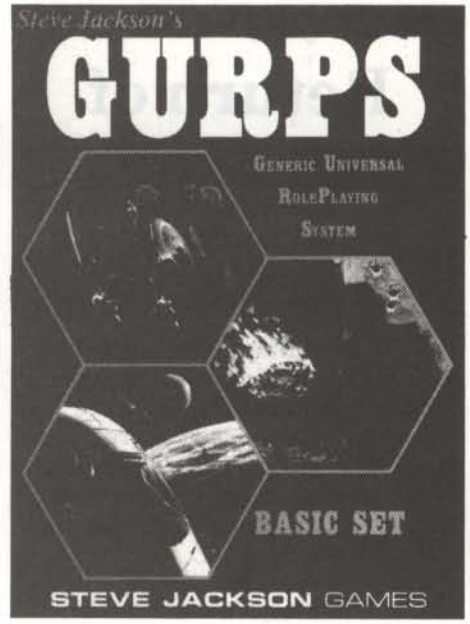
Each level will have its own personality and theme, Adams promises, and the game itself will have multiple endings, fitting each player's style and psychology. He described the ultimate ending as the "cosmic" level, an ending that will be very demanding. "Only five Per cent of the people playing will solve it on that level", he said.

And the game itself will acknowledge the devotion of **Wizardry** players from all over. For the monsters whom Werna will be facing are none other than the real player-characters from past Wizardry players. Some were faulty disks sent in to be corrected, others to prove that they had solved the current scenario. Woodhead and Adams have assembled this motley crew into a whole array of dungeon wanderers, whose task is to stop Werdna.

If you are wondering how you, as Werdna, are going to be able to fight these characters by yourself, don't worry. Werdna will have the ability to summon his own allies to assist him. In a bit of a twist, however, the player will not control these monsters; the computer assumes full control for the actions, even down to spell-casting. This leaves time for the player to spend considering the other unique problems of this scenario.

The physical layout of Werdna is the familiar full-screen graphics/windows from **Legacy of Llylgamyn,** with the input interface being cleaned up for one-keystroke entry. There will be four double-sided disks (Apple version) for this monster (originally there were sixteen disks, which meant a serious overhaul and delay in design). I could go on, but that will have to wait until Werdna is released and I come back to these pages with an in-depth look. **Viva La Adventure!**

New Advantages and Disadvantages for GURPS



by
Steve Mills and Michael DeWolfe

The GURPS Basic Set has a plethora of advantages and disadvantages to shape characters. This article supplies more of the above in an attempt to add more flexibility to character creation.

ADVANTAGES

Slow Aging-5 points

The character begins aging at both a higher age and slower speed than others. Characters below the age of 60 do not make Aging rolls and above age 60, make HT+2 rolls for aging. Similiarily, characters around you will believe you are ten to 20 percent younger than you actually are (when above 25 years). A side effect is that disadvantages of Age cannot be begun until the character is over 60 (not the standard 50).

Stoicism-10 points

You can keep a straight face in any situation. By making an IQ+3 roll, you can keep your face expressionless, immune to jokes, threats or suprising incidents for upwards of a minute. Stoic characters are at +3 to Fast Talk and +1 to all Social skills. Any character using Detect Dies is at a further -3 when confronted with a lying Stoic character.

Strong Digestion-10 points

You have an amazingly strong digestive system which makes you almost impervious to alcohol, ingested poisons and rotten food. You are basically immune to the effects of all but the most potent alcoholic beverages. Any digestive agent poison roll is at HT+5 and halve the subsequent effects if the roll fails. Rotten food does not affect you, but you do not get any nutritive value from eating it. With this advantage, it is also possible to pass such things as glass shards and many other sharp or caustic substances through your system with no adverse effects.

PHYSICAL DISADVANTAGES

Asthma- -10-20 points

The character experiences respiratory difficulties from the narrowing of air passages to the lungs. This condition is much more dangerous without medicine which is available at Tech Level 6 or above (for $1 per dose, each spray is one dose). For this reason, this disadvantage is worth only -10 points at Tech Level 6 or above but -20 points otherwise. Asthma can be triggered by stressful situations; make a roll vs. HT or suffer the effects of an asthma attack as described below. Also, for every point of Fatigue lost to physical exertion make a roll vs. HT or experience an asthma attack. The effects of an asthma attack are: a loss of 1 Hit Point immediately and the victim wheezes uncontrollably and must rest (sit down or stand in place) for 1 dice + (HT lost) minutes. The character must make a HT roll after every rest period or lose another Hit Point, if the HT roll is made, the attack ceases. With a dose of the appropriate medicine the next HT roll can be made at +5. If the first dose fails, successive uses drop the HT roll bonus by 1 (e.g. HT +5 becomes HT +4 and so on). After five uses, the medicine no longer helps. If the character does not rest he loses another Hit Point automatically per minute without rest. If HT reaches zero the victim dies of asphyxiation.

Heart Condition- -25 points

Your character runs the high risk of having a heart attack. Whenever the character is endangered (by exertion, or bad luck) there's a chance he keels over. If a character exerts himself to the point of spending a point of Fatigue, make a HT roll; success means chest

pains; a failure means chest pains, then a heart attack. For every month a character survives without a heart attack, make an HT +3 roll; a failure means a heart attack at some random, inappropriate time. A heart attack costs 2+1 HT of damage. If the character's HT falls below zero, he passes out. If it falls below -HT/2, the character dies instantaneously. If the character is unconscious but still alive, he will die in 1 dice of minutes without CPR (given with a First Aid/TL 6+ roll). After the heart attack, the character loses 1-3 points of ST and HT (not Fatigue and Hit Points) and must recover from the damage done by the heart attack (through rest) or suffer another heart attack. There is a -2 to any HT rolls for normally Fat characters and -4 for HT rolls of severely Fat characters.

Narcolepsy- -20 points

Your character keeps falling spontaneously alseep. Once per hour, make a HT+3 roll. If it fails, the character passes into an instant slumber for 1+3 minutes, unable to awaken for the first minute. Whenever the character has to participate in physical activity (eg. running, lifting weights, combat), he must make a HT roll or suffer the same effects as above. At Tech Level 8 or above, there are drugs available to counteract this malady. Each dose must be taken to resist narcolepsy for the following eight hours and costs $3.

Night Blindness- -10 points

You have very few light receptors in your eyes and therefore have extreme difficulty seeing in low light levels. Triple all negative modifiers related directly to darkness (maximum of -10 as this is the equivalent of total blindness). This disadvantage is especially debilitating for those in the wilderness or in medieval (and fantasy) cities which are often almost completely dark at night.

Immunity Deficiency- -10 to -30 points

You have a very weak immune system. The point value of this disadvantage depends upon the severity and on the Tech Level of the world. At Tech Level 7 or above, the normal form of this disadvantage is worth -10 points, while the severe form is worth -30 points. At Tech Level 6 or below the normal form is worth -20 while the severe form is impossible to have as the character would be dead! The normal form of this condition results in a -3 on any roll in resisting diseases. Roll vs. HT once a week in any case, if the roll is failed then assume the character has come into contact with a disease during the week and is now contracting it (G.M.'s note: Base the severity of the disease on the failure of the roll). Also, the recovery period of the disease is twice as long as normal. In High Tech worlds there are many drugs which can counter the effects of disease. With the severe form you contract any disease you come in contact with automatically and must roll vs. HT every day. If you fail the roll you contract a disease, all recovery times are tripled. At Tech Level 8+ drugs, which must be taken constantly, reduce the severity from severe to normal. If the drugs are not taken weekly the condition returns to severe. A week's worth of these drugs cost $100. These same drugs reduce the effects of normal severity to just HT-1, otherwise the same as above.

MENTAL DISADVANTAGES

Homicidal Maniac- -25 points

Your character feels a need to kill--not just in combat, but in the streets and wherever the opportunity presents itself. The character is set off by some common, often ignored, thing in life (eg. the color blue, long black hair,etc.) and is driven to kill (this impuls can be resisted by an IQ-3 roll). After a while, the maniac uses some specific thing to kill his victims (a garrote, an ax, etc.). The maniac has some "logical" reason for these actions (a Major or Severe Delusion) so he doesn't question the murders. Unless the character gives himself away, a Psychology-2 roll is required for someone to realize his disadvantage. This mania is suited for non-player characters.

Masochism- -20 points

You enjoy experiencing pain. This does not apply in combat situations, you would not enjoy being hit in the head with a sword. However, in situations where you possess an implement which can cause pain but not death (eg. knife, cigarette butt, whip etc.) you must resist the urge to use it on yourself by rolling vs. IQ, the damage inflicted upon yourself is 1-5 usually, but 1-4 for dangerous weapons. If you fumble your IQ roll, you try to damage yourself with the full damage the implement can cause. You might also refuse anaesthetic or painkillers. Masochists often ask others directly or indirectly to cause them pain. Someone who is known to be a masochist is reacted to at -3.

Vengeful- -10 points

You must exact revenge upon any of those who sleight you in any way. This revenge can be of an equal or more serious nature than the offending act but never less serious. You must initially roll vs. IQ to resist the impulse to immediately exact your revenge, unless impossible, in which case it would be sought at the first chance. For every week that this revenge is not achieved, another roll vs. IQ can be made to attempt to quell the urge for revenge (of course, if the offender is presented at your doorstep at a later date, you will probably not feel any qualms upon exacting your revenge).

The Black Sword Strikes!

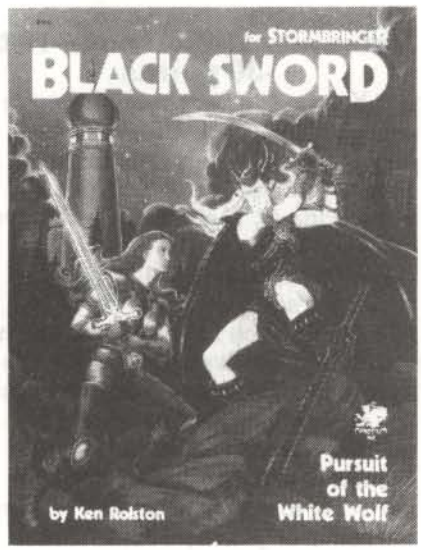
This is the second adventure detailing a woman's search for her father's killer, Elric of Melnibone. These events take place after "The Bane of the Black Sword", a Michael Moorcock book in the Elric series. The adventurers travel from the city of Bakshaan, in Ilmiora, in search of Elric. It is strictly an affair of revenge.

This is, over all, a fine piece of work. But, like all game scenarios, it has its plusses and minuses. Fortunately enough, the pluses totally outweigh the minuses.

My personal philosophy has always been to get the bad news out of the way first then brighten things up with the good. So here goes! What is wrong with Black Sword? Not too much. All the things I could find were minor, and could have easily been fixed by a bit of careful planning on the part of Chaosium. I've got a list here of ALL the stuff I found wrong with Black Sword and we'll start right at the top.

Artwork. This is the one feature that really bugs me about the scenario. The brothers Day are good artists. But not for Stormbringer. SB requires a style that the Days just haven't mastered yet. On pages 1 and 6 are pictures of the heroine, Freyda Nikorn. Taking a close look at them, they're the same picture, you can easily see that she has TWO left hands! And her sword, even though it's demonic, is way out of scale, especially with the one on the cover. Also the illos of Elric plainly show him wearing a leather/chainmail armor. Anyone notice the mistake? That's right! Elric always wears plate armor. Says so right in the rules. I wonder if the folks at Chaosium told the Days this? Hmmm. Plus they forgot that Elric is an albino and not a corpse. The cover illo's make him look dead.

Information. It is stated that Stealer Of Souls and Black Sword can be played separately. This is true. But information on Bakshaan, in Stealer Of Souls, should have been included here too. They re-



used artwork, why not info? There is also no information given that would lead the characters to Nadsokor. What clues led them? How do they, the PC's know that Elric went there?

Narjhan, the Chaotic god of the Beggars, was well done. The illustration depicting him was one of the better ones in the book. He actually looked the part. The only thing that bothered me about him was his summoning powers. The Elemental Rulers don't take kindly to Chaotic Lords controlling their subjects. And why would Narjhan summon an Elemental in the first place when he could have a horde of demons instead. A minor problem but one that irks a SBophile.

The organization section was well done indeed! Maps, background, et. al., were superb. But there is this continual reference to some deities called the "Beastmasters". On the plane of the Young Kingdoms there are the Beast Lords. Mr. Rolston either got them mixed up or created a whole new addition to the Young Kingdom's Pantheon of Deities.

One of the major Problems with Stealer Of Souls was that it played like a script. Everything was set out. You will go to point A and action X will happen. Then you will go to....ad nauseum. Well Black Sword doesn't suffer from that scripting effect. Or at least not to the extent that its predecessor did. I do strongly object to the killing of the horses in the plains section of the adventure. The GM MUST, according to the author, kill them so that the characters enter the barbarian territories on foot. This automatically puts the PC's at a disadvantage. Not only in terms of equipment they could be carrying but sociologically as well. I, as a GM and player, find this repugnant. If the characters can save even one or two horses they should be allowed to.

The last of my gripes is Karlaak. The map scale is all wrong. Karlaak by the Weeping Wastes isn't some small outpost. It's a major city! Big! In Black Sword it's relegated to the size of an 1800's trading post. And there are two, count'em, two, Temples of the Sun. I wasn't even aware that there were any Sun god worshippers on that plane, (unless you can count the barbarians of the Weeping Wastes who worship nature in a variety of ways.).

Well that's it for the bad news, which wasn't really that bad. Now for the good stuff. What I really liked. The whole thing! The semi-intelligent baboons were a nice RQ touch. Nadsokors design was excellent. Everything from the maps, (which I did find a bit too small for my tastes), to the NPC's and thrir lifestyles. All the major NPC's were well thought out and colorful. I especially liked "Dhandi" and Wino. The section dealing with Org was phenomenal! As an info source it can't be beat. (Although Mr. Rolston changed things around a bit from what was said in the rulebook.). Of special interest is the "Seeds of Destruction" section. Remarkable!

Among the other gems of this adventure were the plethora of choices for the PC's. A campaign could easily be formed around this booklet and its individual sections.

The scenario extensions for each section were well thought out and well done. Treasure and other loot was kept to a bare minimum. The barbarians of the plains were a good touch, as were the contests and the addition of the badlands; and the Dharzi Sorcerer Pemmnetr, while a bit out of the ordinary for a Stormbringer adventure, was refreshingly original. And, finally, Elric's options for the "Final Conflict" were great. The choices were darn near endless and all exceptionally thought out. The only one that was left out was that, in the direst of emergencies, Stormbringer, the sword, would have broken out of the armory and flown to Elric's aid. Undoubtedly!

So, in conclusion, I have to give Black Sword a thumbs up. An exceptional adventure and one that will provide more than one night's play. If you are going to buy even one Stormbringer product this year buy Black Sword. It won't be wasted money or time.

May Balo Brighten Your Days
And Arkyn Enrich Your Nights!

The Black Sword Strikes!
Black Sword- Pursuit of the White Wolf
A Stormbringer Adventure.
Published by Chaosium, Inc.
Designed by Ken Rolston
Complexity Level: Moderate
Rules Clarity: Good
Graphics Quality: Fair to good
Reviewed by Michael R. Jarrell

Holy Agrik!

Gods Of Harn is a major addition to the ever-expanding world of Harn. The 72-page booklet presents the ten dieties of The Pantheon, the history of their interaction, and their respective religions and clerical orders. Also included are illustrations of clerical garments, badges and achievements

of the monastic fighting orders, and a calendar of important religious dates.

Each deity entry encompasses mythic legends and stories surrounding the god, origins, history, and structure of the associated church(es), clerical and fighting orders, religious practices, codes, and rituals, canon law, relations with the state, plus the location of churches, temples, and shrines associated with the deity on Harn and Ivinia. The Religion entry is an overview of the whole Pantheon, and most of it can also be found in other Harn sources.

The designers of Harn claim that it is a world produced specifically for fantasy role playing. **Gods Of Harn** is further proof against this claim, for there is nothing here to aid the gamemaster in integrating this tome into a campaign. The color pages devoted to clerical robes and badges would be of more interest to a costume designer than to a gamer. More importantly, the religious systems are all very dogmatic, and players running clerics are going to find very little flexibility in what they can and cannot do.

Robin Crossby and friends are to be commended for their research and creative efforts in designing an original pantheistic system. It makes for fascinating reading, but not necessarily fascinating gaming.

HOLY AGRIK!
Gods Of Harn
Published by Columbia Games, Inc.
Designed by N. Robin Crossby, Tom Dagliesh, John Frazer, Edwin King
Complexity Level: High
Rules Clarity: Good
Graphics Quality: Fair
Reviewed by J. Michael Caparula

Kingdom of Menglana

Menglana is the latest in Columbia's on-going module series set in their fantasy world of Harn. Before I go into depth on this particular item, a bit of background on the concept of Harn would be useful, especially to those people not yet acquainted with this product.

Harn is touted as a "complete" fantasy world, capable in total or in any one of its parts, of providing a GM with the necessary materials to construct campaigns, adventures, serials, etc. Columbia Games has indeed offered the gaming public a very complete series of inter-locking modules. "Harn" as a title itself is somewhat misleading, the original publications dealt with the island of Harn as a separate part of the larger world of Kethira. Harn is covered by nine kingdom modules, a Gods' module and a Cities' module. Later publications have expanded our world of knowledge to include the neighboring continent of Lythia, which is, at present, covered by two modules. Lythia, being at least 20 times the size of Harn, should take quite a while to fully document, and evidence shows that there are still other "unknown" lands to document! So, more definitely is to come.

So, what exactly is one getting here? Really, it depends on what the

GM wants to get from this system. Very roughly, one can operate on any of four levels. You can purchase the basic Harn module which provides a nicely done map of the island and two books that give a basic overview of how this place operates. GM's could then use any FRP system and create their own detailed worlds. Or, one could purchase any one (or two, or three....) of the kingdom modules and run all the adventures within them. These modules are much more detailed looks at sections of Harn, giving one more people, places, locals, fiefdoms and potential adventures to deal with. Columbia has produced their own FRP system, HARNMASTER, which means a GM can simply adopt it to his own world, or use it in conjunction with either of the levels mentioned above. Finally, a person can purchase the Lythia/Ivinia materials, along with the aforementioned Gods and Cities modules, and simply (or complexly, depending on your point of view) involve players in the entire mythos of "Harn".

A kingdom module being perhaps the most "basic" place to start, we'll look at Menglana as an example of what the buyer receives. Modules start out giving a brief history of the kingdom up to the "present". Lineage of the ruling family is discussed, as well as the operations of the government, law, economics, religion, etc. found in this kingdom. The different provinces, (shires, counties, states, etc.) receive treatment of roughly a similar manner as the kingdom, and the modules usually close with material on some of the non-associated tribal groups wandering in the area as well as any ruins of ancient cultures.

The centerpiece of each module is the full color map of the kingdom itself, very well detailed, with other color maps showing the layouts of the major cities and/or ancient ruins covered in the module. Maps show contour lines and have coded indexes (for cities) showing the major buildings of the town, their owners and other bits of pertinent

information. Columbia, to their credit, also gives the GM black and white renditions of the cities for photocopying purposes, so that players might have uncoded reference maps to plot their moves, ideas, etc. on. The detail and quality of these maps are very good, they certainly make for an attractive and pleasing product.

Another fine tradition is that of "blowing apart" some major buildings to show their interior details. An index is given to show things like: types of windows, etc. This kind of detail certainly helps out any GM, though the Menglana module is somewhat scarce in the amount of buildings so illustrated, and the index doesn't appear either, meaning you should take consideration of that if you've never bought any other module before.

Menglana is one of the kingdoms found in the Ivinia section of the Lythian continent. It, and its neighbors, are the equivalent of our own Vikings. There is an internal power struggle simmering along, with perhaps three possible groups jockeying for position. Also, a border/trade/personality dispute is threatening to break out into war with a neighboring kingdom, Ibanvaal. Since Vikings are evoked, the area of the kingdom is fjord-oriented, with strong clans, fortified cities, few roads and much potential for piracy. GM's should take note of the possibilities of using rival clans to be backdrops for players to raid against or attempt to subjugate, as examples of the latter are somewhat frequent in the pages of this module. As such, vendettas against other clans will be quite easy to "arrange", giving players a wide scope of options to follow up on.

Though Columbia likes to say that the kingdom modules stand alone, very few of them fully do so, what with neighbors being neighbors, the allies or partners. There are just enough "hooks" in each module to encourage you to buy other modules so that one gets a full picture of the world you're adventuring in. While this is never overly blatant (indeed it is mostly subtle, more statement of fact), these modules are more or less links of a chain. They are each very well done, but they all interact to form the Harn world. If one gets hooked, there are 16 current links in that chain, which will run a person over $200.00. Is Harn worth that much, especially for what is, in effect, research material? To me, yes. To people just starting out, no. Buy the HARN module (#5001) and see if this is what you've been looking for in a concept world. If it is, take it from there.

Summing up, **Menglana** is a good addition to Harn. Of the now 11 kingdom modules, it looks better physically than most of them, the typo problem (too many) is better, but still present and the situation is one that will allow for a good Viking "feel" to any FRP system. For myself, the excitement level of Menglana is low, if only because the Orbaal module gave me all the Viking material I wanted to deal with. I do recommend it and the Harn mythos because N. Robin Crossby, Eric Hotz, et al, have kept me entertained and curious these past four years. Hopefully, they can do the same for you.

KINGDOM OF MENGLANA
Kingdom module for the Harn system
Published by Columbia Games
Reviewed by G. E. Smith

Kings & Things*

Kings & Things is a wacky new fantasy board game designed by Tom Wham with Doug Kaufman and published by West End Games in conjunction with Games Workshop. Before I go any further you should be forwarned that "wacky" is perhaps too tame a word to describe this game. Any gamers who blanch at the hint of "illogical" or "zaniness" should give this game a wide berth and stop reading this review now before I go on to mention the Killer Penguins.

Rather than continue into the oddities of Tom Wham's mind, let us go in search of Kings & Things. The game is set in the Kingdom of Kadab where two to four players act as minor nobles attempting to become the new Emperor of a United Kingdom. To aid the players in assuming the proper role, historical notes and chronological information abounds. Not wishing to bore readers with the historical details, let it suffice to mention only two important dates in Kadab. The first is The Year 0, also known as the Big Oops when the Universe was created. The second was the year 250 in which Yazilik University was accidentally destroyed when the fanatical members of the declining priesthood of Sulugi accidentally pointed a powerful temple artifact at the school and accidentally shouted "Destroy the vile wizards". This act set magic randomly loose on the kingdom changing terrain and scattering magic items. This little known episode, also known as "The Big Boom", is why the game board changes every time you play and sometimes during play.

A work on becoming Emperor is in order. To win at Kings & Things it is necessary to impress the locals and other minor nobles. This is done in Kadab by building that marvelous feat of engineering known as the Citadel. To build a citadel requires an income of 20 gold pieces. If one player can build a citadel and hold it for one turn, he wins. If two or more players build citadels in the some turn then the game continues until one player captures a second citadel.

In order to create this world to conquer, the game contains 48 hex tiles used to build the board, 351 playing pieces with drawings of colorful comic characters, 8 player racks to hold some of the player's counters, a 16-page rule book including a 4-page pullout section, and 4 dice. In addition the gamers will need to provide that most mystic element for the reincarnation of the creatures of Kadab, a cup.

Setting up the game starts with the building of the board. Four sea hex tiles are set aside and the rest are shuffled. These 2 1/2" hexes are then placed in a hexagonal pattern of 37 tiles face down. Players roll for high dice to determine who will go first. The players select their starting positions in order, not having seen the board. Once the starting locations have been chosen the hexes are flipped so the board is revealed. This procedure seems cumbersome since there is no rational way to decide on a starting location with no known information. It would be quicker to simply select a starting position based on where you are sitting and then set the hexes out face up to begin with.

Once the board is put together, the world of Kadab is ready for habitation. Each player selects three starting territories and randomly draws ten creatures, magic items, random events, treasures, special income counters, and other things from the cup. Exchanging bad draws is allowed. Then the players place the counters they wish to begin in play on the board and place the counters they wish to save on their racks.

During each phase each player performs the necessary actions in player order. There are eight phases which made up each turn. After each turn the player order shifts one to the left.

The first phase is Gold Collection. Each player totals his income based on the number of hexes owned, special income counters in play, special characters currently controlled, and the value of forts. In order to maintain a large income it is necessary to enlarge the number of hexes under your control and build forts. These two activities are the ones over which players have the most control. Special income counters are nice, but random. Special character can be selected but must be diced for.

The second phase is Recruiting Characters. Each player has a chance to convince one Special Character to join his rag-tag army. The Special Character is chosen and his combat value is doubled to determine the roll needed on two dice to enlist his aid. Since the combat values vary from four to six, this means Special Characters can be recruited (depending on the one

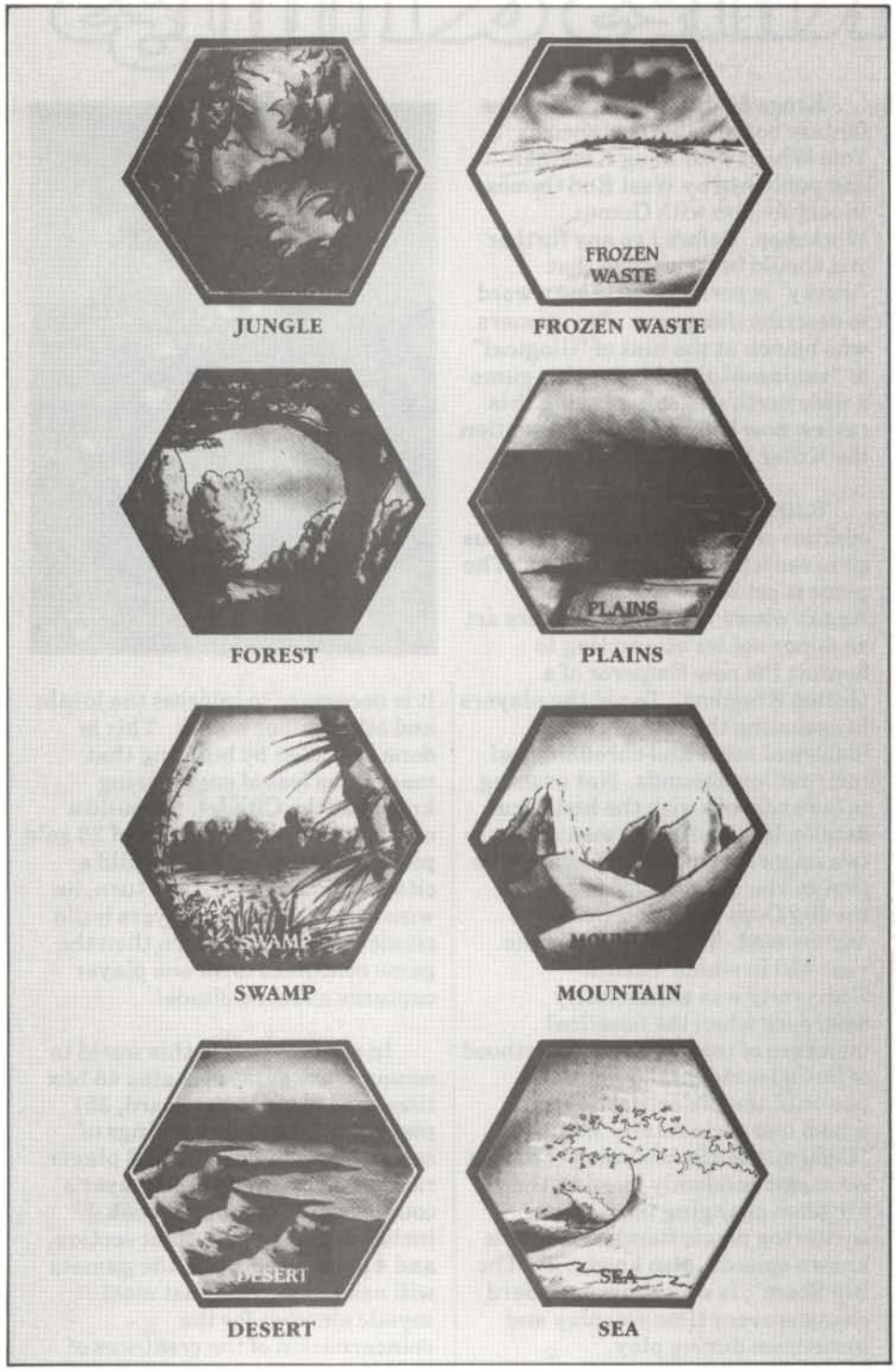
Kings & Things
Designed by: Tom Wham with Doug Kaufman
Published by: West End Games
Price: $19.95
Reviewed by: Richerd A Edwards

chosen) by rolling an eight or better. Dice roll modifiers may be purchased by spending gold pieces. For every five gold spent BEFORE rolling the dice you may add one to the roll. AFTER the roll the cost is ten gold per point.

The third phase is Recruiting Things. This is when each player sticks his hand in the cup and pulls out a number of creatures, special income counters, magic items, and other things. The number each player can draw depends on the number of hexes owned. In addition to receiving one chit for each two hexes owned, players can also spend up to twenty-five gold to purchase additional counters at five gold each. If players wish to rid themselves of useless counters on their racks, they may trade in a pair of them for one extra counter in the draw. After the Things are drawn, they are placed on the board in hexes owned by the player or on the rack to await future use. The only limits are ten creatures in each hex and no more than ten counters on the rack.

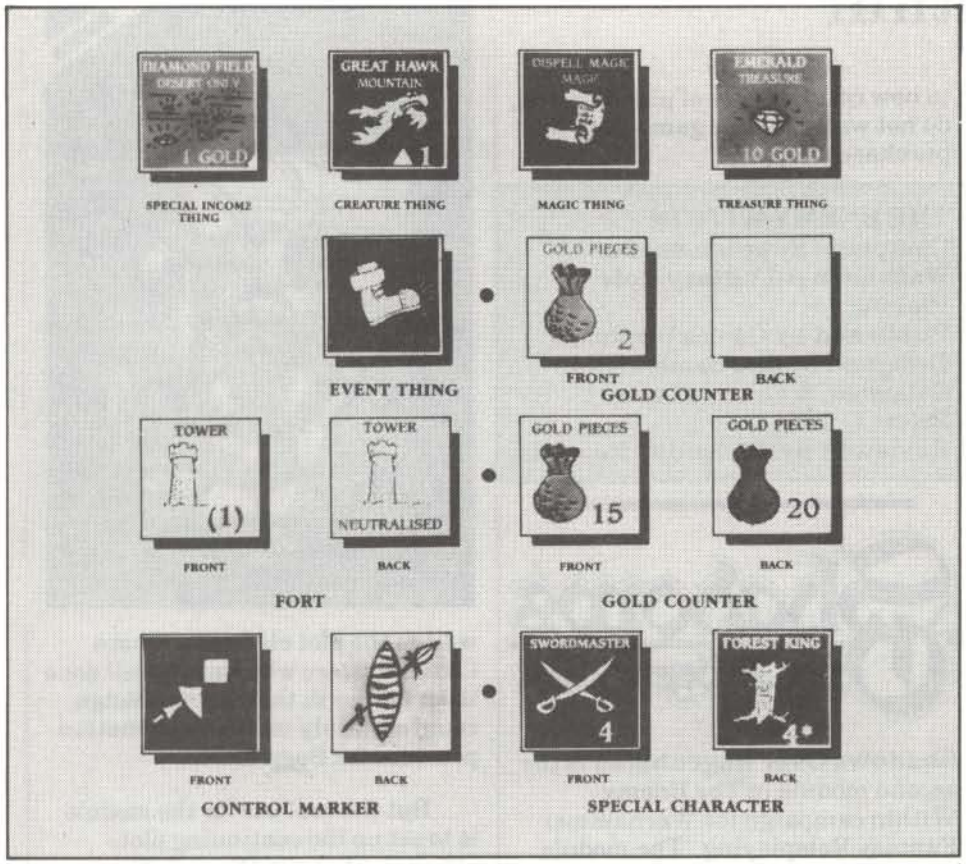
One special note: The members of your rag-tag army come from many terrain types. Their ability to fight for you depends on your controlling a hex of their terrain type or providing them with a leader from their homeland. You may place creatures on the board even if you cannot support them with such a hex or leader, but if they are noticed as unsupported in combat your opponent can demand their removal to the cup. Such counters are called Bluffs and are useful for face down activities such as garrisoning areas with large piles of counters or exploring uninhabited areas. Many a game has been won by an unsupported army group that went unnoticed until it was too late.

The fourth phase is a rather unique Random Events play. Each player, in order, may play one random event counter, if they have one. The random events vary from gaining an immediate partial income to changing one hex of the board's terrain (known as pulling the Big JuJu).



The fifth phase is Movement where every creature and special character may move four hexes, except that each swamp, mountain,forest and jungle hex count as two hexes. There is a pinning rule which states that if at the beginning of your movement there are enemy counters in your hex then your things cannot move. In addition if you enter an enemy occupied hex or an unexplored hex you must stop. The exception to this is flying creatures which can proceed unless the enemy force contains flying creatures to stop them.

The sixth phase is Combat and



Exploration. Each player, in order, takes turns resolving one conflict, either combat in an enemy occupied hex, or exploration (usually combat) in an unexplored hex. Exploration entails rolling a six-sided die. On a one or six the hex is empty and is added to your domain. On a two to five it contains two to five randomly drawn counters which you must, if needs be, battle or bribe before conquering the territory. Combat is very simple, sort of. Each creature, special character, fort, city and village has a number for its combat factor. In addition it may have a notation showing it to be a magic, ranged, charging, multiple hit, or special rule unit. Basically combat happens in five rounds. First all magic units attack, then after hits are removed, ranged units attack, then after further hits, the regular units attack including charging units. An attack consists of rolling the unit's number or less on one die to create a hit. For every hit the enemy chooses a unit to remove or a multiple hit unit to lose one step. After these three rounds of attack, first the attacker, then the defender, may choose to retreat. These four steps are repeated until only one player remains when the post-combat round occurs, changing control markers and rolling for fort and income counter damage.

The seventh phase is Construction. This is when you build the forts that defend your growing empire and eventually upgrade a Castle into the marvelled Citadel.

The eighth phase is the Special Powers phase, where the Master Thief and Assassin Primus practice their arts.

The last phase is to change the player order.

Before you decide you can now conquer the world of Kadab remember that magic items, random events, and special characters, not to mention lucky draws, can turn the best laid plans into mush. Kings & Things is a game of strategy and planning, but it is more truly a game of crisis management. It is necessary to change your tactics with the flow of the game and the draw of the counters. A minor noble who insists on following a plan to the end will often find his end before he expected it.

Kings & Things is designed as a four player game and while options for three and two players are included the game really is at its best with four players. And the length of play is somewhat long for a quick and easy game. Our games usually ran between four and six hours.

The design is clean and playable, and the subject matter insane. The components are clean, colorful, and plentiful. The pace varies between wild and weird in this game, which by now you should understand I enjoy immensely.

If you have four players with gaming time to fill with a wild and crazy game, then by all means spend an evening exploring the world of Kadab. Who knows, you might be the next Emperor.

The Enemy Within

The Enemy Within is the first module in a set of linked campaign modules set in the Warhammer world. It comes complete with a full color players map of the Empire, a 56-page booklet, and handouts for the players and GM. The first half of the booklet is an introduction to the Empire and sets up the background for the war against Chaos. Also provided are pre-generated characters for a party of six complete with background within the empire.

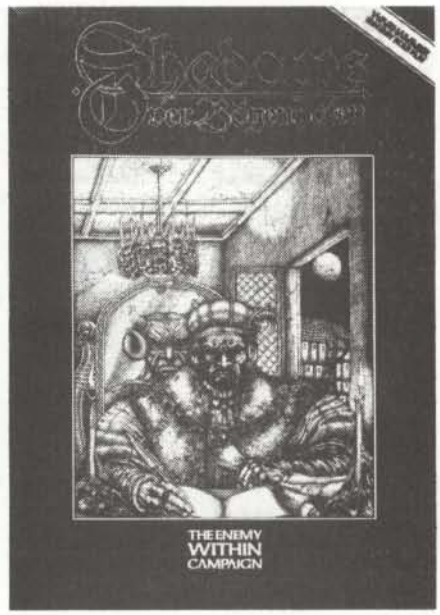
The graphic quality of this Games Workshop module is so high that I purchased it despite the high cost before I even purchased the Warhammer Fantasy Role Playing rules just so I could use the background material and handouts. The maps included are first rate and the use of handouts for the players fits well into the mysterious plot and enhances the players tactile enjoyment.

The background material includes information on the imperial government, the calendar, herbs, religion, and many other details, all accompanied by beautiful illustrations. Unlike most fantasy roleplaying campaigns this one is not set in the Middle Ages, but rather in the Renaissance. There is road transportation by coach, but there are also bandits and highwaymen. There are surgeons, but also the plague. The richness of the material and the depth of scope are wondrous.

The introductory adventure included brings out beginning heros together at a coaching inn and then welds them together against the forces of Chaos and confrontation with the law. Threads of plots begin which will take several modules to complete. If nothing else, this is a campaign of breadth.

If you want to bring your roleplaying group a new experience in roleplaying and introduce them to new complexities of plot then run, do not walk, to your game store and purchase a copy.

THE ENEMY WITHIN
Campaign Supplement for Warhammer Fantasy Role Playing
Published by Games Workshop
Designed by Jim Bambra, Phil Gallagher, & Graeme Davis
Price: $12.00
Reviewed by: Richard A. Edwards



Shadows Over Bögenhafen

Shadows Over Bogenhafen is the second module in The Enemy Within campaign for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplaying. The module includes a full color players' map of the city of Bogenhafen, a tactical map of the temple, players handouts, and a 45-page booklet.

Shadows picks up where the first module left off and takes the adventures to the fair at Bogenhafen. The descriptions and encounters of the Schaffenfest (as the fair is called) are first rate and even the minor random encounters can generate hours of play. But sooner or later the heroes will pick up the threads of the plot and begin working their way under, over, and through Bogenhafen in an attempt to save the city from chaotic destruction.

Can they do it? Will they solve the puzzles in time? Will they use huge amounts of fate points? Only your gaming group can tell, but even if they fail the adventure will be well worth the attempt.

The module comes with handouts to peak interest and a booklet packed with a gazetteer to the town, a list of major families, as well as the plot elements. Those Game Masters who want a well done town for use in their own camaign could certainly use the information provided for Bogenhafen.

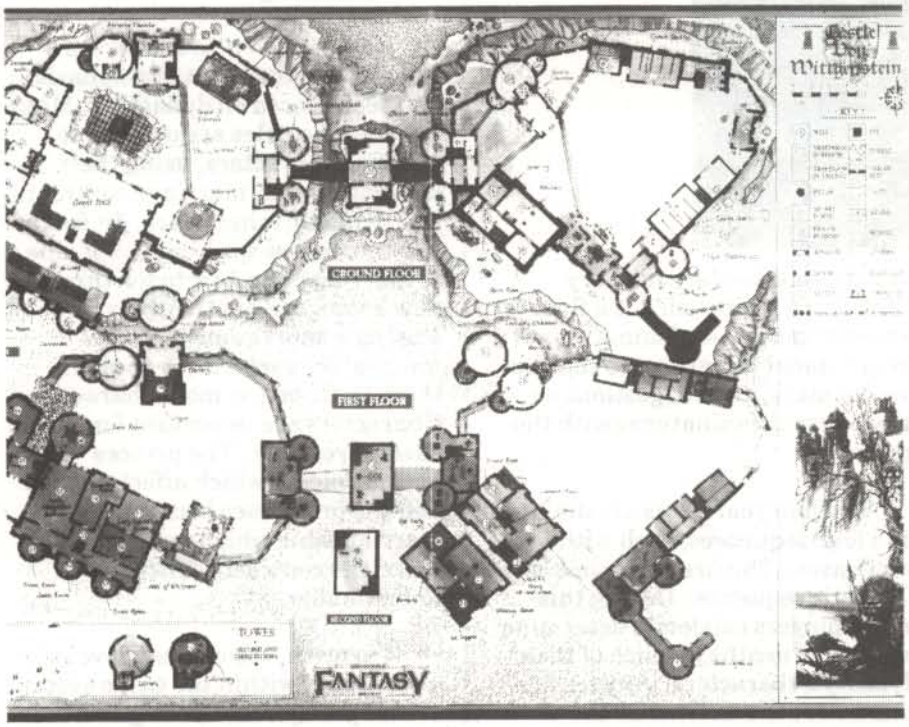
But the real use for the module is to set up the continuing plot elements that run through The Enemy Within campaign. While the adventures will resolve a major adventure one way or another they will also discover NPCs who will lead them further on and will continue to uncover leads which will pull them deeper into the plot.

Due to the huge amount of information provided, some of the details are hard to locate easily. It seems there should be some better way to organize the material, but the effort to organize it is obvious. Running this adventure will require the GM to be very familiar with the background, but that is an assumption for any game in the series.

SHADOWS OVER BOGENHAFEN
Campaign Supplement for Warhammer Fantasy Role Playing
Published by Games Workshop
Designed by Graeme Davis, Jim Bambra, & Phil Gallagher.
Price: $12.00
Reviewed by: Richard A. Edwards

Death On the Reik

Death On The Reik is the third module in the Enemy Within campaign for Warhammer Fantasy Roleplaying. It is Games Workshop's first boxed module and includes a thick 86-page book as well as a large number of player and GM handouts, maps, and notes. Also included is a full color castle floorplan and map of the area around the River Reik. Also included is a 16-page booklet on the river life of the empire which includes encounters while boating on the river.



Having escaped from Bogenhafen one way or another the players find themselves in need of transportaion and so take to the river. The information provided on the river and its encounters can last many play sessions, but the real adventures lie within the main book. As various cults continue to harass the characters they try to further their careers and trace a winding path across the empire in search of someone they finally identify as an enemy. One path leads to another and after visiting many deadly sites and marvelous cities (including Kemperbad with its mysterious systems of lifts) they confront one horror only to let another escape. And so the plot continues.

The graphical presentation of this series is amazing. The detailed castle map is useable in any gaming situation which could require one and the river material is likewise useable in other systems. But the real value of this package is as part of the continuing saga of The Enemy Within.

The only problem with the material is that with so much information presented, it is difficult to organize it, and due to the complexity of the plots, it is necessary for the GM to refer to bits of information in one place and then another. Games Workshops attempt at organization is well done, but falls a little short of the mark. It will take a very organized Games Master to keep track of everything going on at the same time and remember where all the little details are written down.

If your group has not yet begun, then pass Death On The Reik until you have bought and played The Enemy Within and Shadows Over Bogenhafen.

DEATH ON THE REIK
Campaign Supplement for Warhammer Faniasy Role Playing
Published by: Games Workshop
Designed by: Graene Davis, Jim Bambra, & Phil Gallagher.
Price: $18.00
Reviewed by: Richard A. Edwards

Blood Royale

Power is Wealth Wealth is Power

Blood Royale is a game of power, politics, and armies set in Europe during the fourteenth century. During five year turns each of 3 to 5 players build a dynasty of characters, enter into diplomatic agreements, handle random events, raise taxes and resources, and go to war. To aid the players in this endeavor they are provided with a full color six part board, 30 plastic playing pieces (Kings & Princes), 96 plastic coins, pads of bearer bonds, marriage contracts, and character sheets, 63 event cards, dice, and over 250 large full color counters.

Opening the box, which is three inches thick, is an awesome experience. Inside are hundreds of components in bright colors which help to invoke the flavor of the era. The contents are nothing if not impressive. The rules are 24 pages long, but an easy rules summary accompanies the game. And the rules themselves are not very difficult. Also included is a flyer for a special purchase of minatures from Citadel Minatures to replace the counters, and suggestions on how to use the minatures with the game.

The five year turns are divided into four sequences, each with subphases. The first sequence is the Dynastic sequence. During this phase players randomly determine births and deaths for each of their dynasty's characters. Any new characters are written on the character forms and their characteristics of constitution, charisma, and strength are randomly determined. Diplomacy then follows with any marriages agreed upon being written up on a marriage contract, the terms of which cannot be broken by either party while the marriage continues. The sequence ends with announcements by all players as to the results of their rolls and marriages. The second sequence is called the Interphase during which taxes are raised, resources are placed on the board, and forces are maintained or raised. The counter mix limits forces to twenty armies and four fleets. The third sequence is Movement, which includes the moving of royal pieces and armies and fleets (each move three areas) and the resolution of any combat which they enter into. Also at the beginning of this phase, the first player to move (which is determined randomly) determines the random event. In the basic game this is a dice roll, with the optional rules, the event card deck is used. The final sequence is Cashing In Resources, when combinations of resource markers currently in your capital can be exchanged for cold hard cash.

Both in the rules and in the design structure a lot of emphasis has been placed on dynasties. Many pages of the rules are devoted to creating characters, using their characteristics, marriage contracts, and dynastic inheritence. In fact a player can lose his kingdom if, due to marriage, the heir to his throne now belongs to another player. During a short game it is not unusual for each player to run through fifteen or more characters. Characters are important for several reasons. The princes become pieces which affect combat and the princesses become marriageable which leads to marriage contracts which are unbreakable.

Taxation, resources, movement, and combat within the game system are all pretty basic. The game uses area movement with movement into enemy controlled areas stopping movement. Combat is resolved simultaneously using a combat matrix which combines the number of armies with a dice roll to give the number of armies the enemy loses. The winner of the game is the one with the most money for, as the subtitle of the game says, "Power is Wealth, Wealth is Power". Taxes are raised and resources traded and

hoarded to provide money to save up to win the game. The fact that some funds must be spent on armies and fleets is an irritant, especially considering that war is expensive and seldom productive.

The optional rules do a lot to enhance the game, especially the random event cards and provincial governor rules. But in the end it all comes down to knowing when to save money, when to open limited wars, and who to marry.

The game can take up to twenty turns and each turn runs between half an hour and forty-five minutes. Short games can be played by announcing the time or turn of ending before play begins. But the longer you play the more chance that the dynastic aspects will come into play, and in many ways they are the heart of the game. For example, much of the game is spent trying to get one counter of each basic resource by trade. There are three such counters and most countries start with two in their area. A turn in of all three at the end of the turn brings in 50 crowns. A successful marriage of your daughter to a prince who becomes a king brings you 100 crowns.

The back of the game box proclaims "Blood Royale is not a role-playing game, or a boardgame, or a simulation game, or a wargame - it is all four." And I believe they have indeed created such a hybrid. Unlike Warrior Knights (also designed by Derek Carver) combat does not play a great part in the game except for those kings with great strength. The winner of the game is more likely to be he who has made good marriages and marriage contracts which provide trade. This devotion to dynasties and lack of martial spirit will puzzle many wargamers. And the randomness of birth, death, and characteristics take much of the ability to control the game out of the hands of players. The winner of a game of Blood Royale is likely to be the player who can make the most of his opponent's bad luck and who can minimize the damage done to him by the random factors of the game itself.

Those gamers who are looking for a medieval wargame should pass wide of this one. Those who are looking for a short multi-player game should also pass this bye. But those gamers who are looking for a good diplomatic game with a medieval setting that combines the aspects mentioned above will not be disappointed with Blood Royale, even at its high price.

PUBLISHED by: GAMES WORKSHOP, 1987
DESIGNED by; DEREK CARVER
PRICE; $35.00
COMPLEXITY; AVERAGE
RULES QUALITY; AVERAGE
GRAPHIC QUALITY; IMPRESSIVE
REVIEWED by; RICHARD A. EDWARDS

BLOOD ROYAL
from Games Workshop

by David Nalle

Blood Royal is a mammoth niw game from the designer of **Warrior Knights,** using a similar concept and setting, but on the whole a much more successful effort. **Blood Royal** comes in a jumbo box, with a large selection of cards and counters, pads of reference sheets, a long and short version of the rules and a six-piece puzzle-board map.

Blood Royal is set in the early 14th century and is a fairly easy to learn game of marriage politics, international trade and military strength on a broad strategic level. It is ideally a five player game, though rules are provided for smaller groups. Players take the roles of the rulers of five major European nations, Germany, Italy, France, Spain and England. They create rulers with rolled characteristics, acquire consorts and start breeding children. The characteristics of rulers and noble military leaders affect the economy. Events, battle, negotiated contracts of marriage and treaties are a major factor in the game. Each country controls certain resources and the economy of the game is based on the trading and exploiting of these resources. Combat is simple and fairly believable, rolled on a simple chart, though a good leader can give an outrageous advantage. Play is fairly balanced, though, true to history, France usually has a very hard time of it, while England and Italy have rather advantageously isolated starting positions. In a very general sense play follows the broad historical trends of the period and players get a very good feel for the power and strategies of rulers and their dynasties. The one historical flaw is that Germany is played as a unified nation, which makes it much stronger than it was historically. In the four player variant it is suggested that England be left out. It would be better to leave England in and make Germany divided territory or neutral land to be taken by its neighbors. This would make things a bit better for France as well. The complete omission of the role of Church and Pope also seems like a mistake, since the game is set in the period of the Avignon papacy when religion was in a flux, which offers great potential for intrigue and strategy which **Blood Royal** fails to take advantage of.

On the whole, **Blood Royal** is an impressive game. It avoids the unecessary complications which drag down **Warrior Knights.** It recreates some aspects of the High Middle Ages with impressive ease and simplicity. **Blood Royal** is a fun game, with elements of role-playing and boardgaming strategy. It is the kind of game which will please a broad audience of recreational gamers, especially those who enjoy games like **Diplomacy** and **Kingmaker.**

MURPHY'S RULES!

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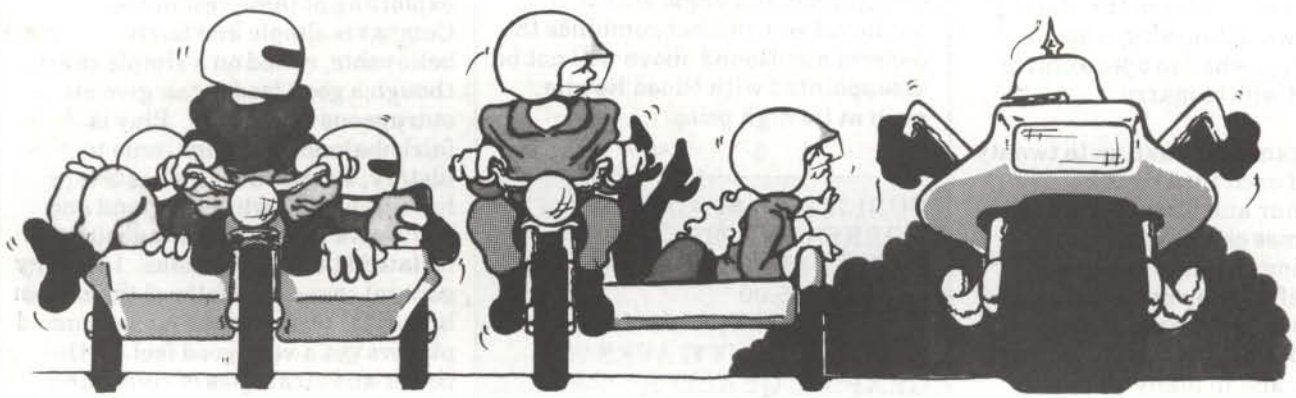


A CAR WARS motorcycle has the same width whether it has one, two, or no side cars.
-Joseph Zaepfel

In the DOCTOR WHO role-playing game, there are rules for reloading weapons but none for running out of ammunition.

Laser tanks in OLYMPICA can fire through mountains.
-Joseph Zaepfel

Book Reports

by
J. Michael Carapula

When it is not speculating on the future implications of science and technology, science-fiction usually concerns itself with socio-political questions. The history of SF is a history of utopias and dystopias, or, more predominantly, rebellion and revolution. Science and technology can come to be a political tool, or a political force to be reckoned with. In the future societies of space-migration, history tends to repeat itself as civilization becomes more fragmented and less centralized.

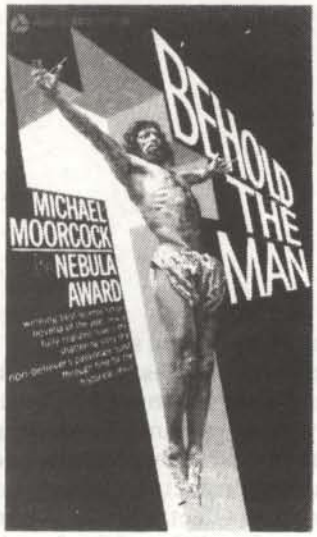
It is the consensus of many SF writers that once mankind pushes off to the mineral-rich asteroids, our first extraterrestrial society will be established. This is the situation in **The Island Worlds** (Baen, $2.95, 279 pp.) by Eric Kotani and John Maddox Roberts, sort of a sequel to **Act Of God**. Seeking to escape a sundering socio-beaucracy on Earth Thor Taggart, descendent of space pioneers, pushes off for the asteroid belt with the help of smuggler Martin Shaw. The one unifying force on Earth is the political party known as Earth First, which blames the planet's problems on space migration. Thor realizes that this party is attempting to create a world state by exercizing its power through the U.N. and building spacers up as a hostile threat. War inevitably results, with Thor becoming part of a space confederacy, while Shaw leads a terrorist campaign against the Earthers.

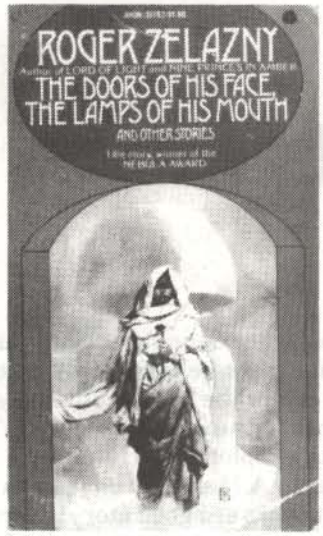
One of the strengths of the novel is Thor's precarious balancing between the Confederacy's diplomatic approach and Shaw's violent fanaticism. The Confederacy denounces Shaw as a criminal, but he ultimately becomes their ace in the hole. Politically, there is nothing here that wasn't already explored in Heinlein's **Moon Is A Harsh Mistress**, but the authors are good storytellers, and there is much in the way of colorful characters, political intrigue, corporate shenanigans, and fast-paced space battles to make it a fun read. Recommended.

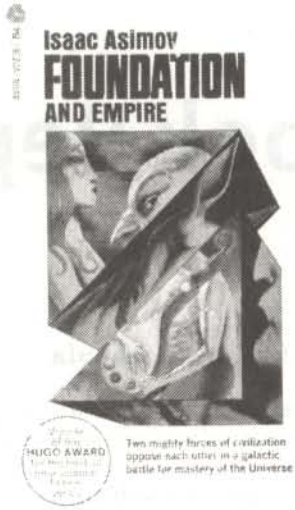
Three visions of social reform are presented in **Under The Wheel** (Baen, $2.95, 272 pp.) the third **"Alien Stars"** volume, compiled by Elizabeth Mitchell. In Gregory Benford's **"As Big As The Ritz"**, an engineering student explores an utopian society created by his girlfriend's father. Brotherworld exists on a Niven-isque hoop stucture that circles a supernova remnant that has "wandered" into our solar system. The visionary Rollan perpetrates a collectivist and somewhat stagnant society, but it turns out that he has higher ambitions, as the protaganist soon discovers. I found Benford to be refreshing in short story form, away from his usual sprawling epics. The science is interesting and the pacing perfect. John M. Ford, a name that should be familiar to **Paranoia** and **Star Trek** players, provides a surprising gem to this set with the provocatively titled **"Fugue State"**. The post-Cold War of the 21st-Century sees a police-state America patrolled by Birdmen in anti-grav airships. The weapon of mind-control is the Vogel device, which can eliminate or replace memories. Policeman Forrester investigates a criminal who can apparently beat the device, but all is not as it seems, as reality shifts gears in a Dickian fashion. Time and memory run backwards toward a philosophical ending to an otherwise action-packed story. Good stuff. This collection concludes with fantasy-writer Nancy Springer's **"Chance"**, a Dark Ages romance in which a woman must confront her love for a tyrannical protector. Springer's lively prose effectvely explores the myths and realities of the female in a time governed by male principles of war and honor.

In Pat Cadigan's **Mindplayers** (Bantam, $3.50,276 pp.). technology enables people to connect directly in the mental realm. But it is not used as a device for political control; instead, it is a commodity and a business for neurosis-peddlers and Power People (personalities for sale). Allie Haas begins as a convicted mind criminal who chooses life as a mental therapist instead of facing jail. She trains as a pathosfinder, one who seeks and destroys emotional hang-ups. Working for Nelson Nelson's corporation, Allie probes a series of neurotic (sometimes psychotic) psyches, while trying to wrestle with her own. Cadigan is a skilled writer in the cyberpunk tradition, and is especially good when describing scenes of mental imagery. **Mindplayers** is also Cadigan's first novel, and she has not made the transition from short-stories very well. The book is fractured and episodic, and it leads to a less-than satisfying ending. Nevertheless, the individual scenes and characters are memorable, especially black-marketeer Jerry Wirehammer and his scattered personalities. **Mindplayers** comes off as a blueprint for a better novel, one that is hopefully in the works.

Just in time for this column is **Burning Chrome** (Ace, $2.95, 191 pp.), a collection of William Gibson's early stories, most of which appeared in Omni magazine. After



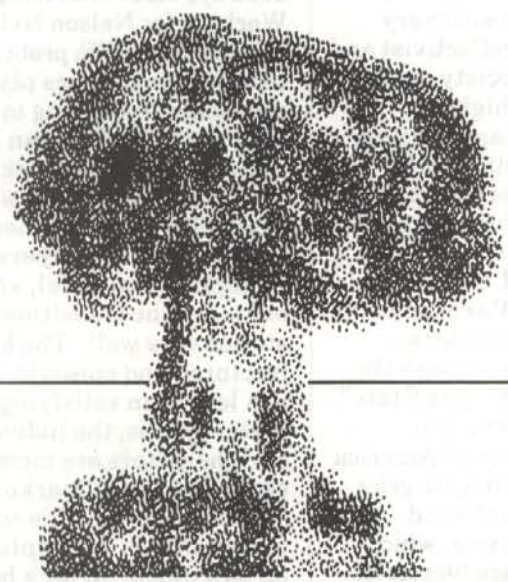



Isaac Asimov
FOUNDATION
AND EMPIRE
HUGO AWARD
Two mighty forces of civilization oppose each other in a galactic battle for mastery of the Universe

a superb introduction by Bruce Sterling, the reader is treated to Gibson's usual shockwaves of the information age in easy-to-swallow form, from corporate pirates to underworld data memmors to the neon neuro-cyber-interfaces of the incredible title story. Two pieces stick in my mind for their gutsy and poetic treatment of futures that never were; in **"The Gernsback Continuum"** a photographer hallucinates the streamlined tomorrow of the 1930's superimposed upon a bleak highway landscape. In **"Red Star, Winter Orbit"**, a Sterling collaboration, the all-too-real decline of the space program conflicts with a famous Soviet cosmonaut's dreams. This is vital reading; harsh, gritty, complex, visionary.

Recent reprints this month include Rudy Rucker's amusing **Software** (Avon), and Roger Zelazny's classic **The Doors of His Face, The Lamps of His Mouth** (Avon). Also look for **The Golden People** by Fred Saberhagen (Baen), Michael Moorcock's **Behold The Man** (Carroll & Graf), and a reissue of Asimov's **"Foundation"** series (Del Rey).

NUKE 'EM TILL THEY GLOW!



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A gamer's guide to the world!

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Gilroy Wargame Association meets at the Gilroy visitors Bureau, 7780 Monterey St. Gilroy, CA 95020. For more info contact Dan Dellinger at (408) 848-4030.

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12.__ New Advantages And Disadvantages For GURPS
13.__ Fantasy Reviews
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15.__ Gamer's Guide Classifieds
16.__ Murphy's Rules
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19.__ **ISSUE OVERALL**

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0201, February 3028 — Tharkad, Decompression, GLD-3R 'Gladiator', BattleMech Weapons — range versus accuracy, Galaina the Pleasure Planet, Vacuum combat, more.
0202, April 3028 Hanse Davion Interview, Cavalry Tactics & Applications, Lasers, BansheeBattleMecn, Dragonslayers, Battle at Wittengate, Late-Breaking News, more.

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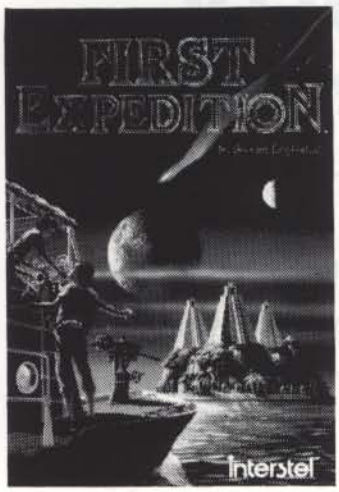

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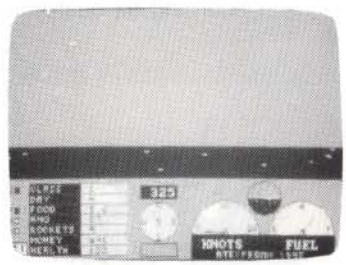

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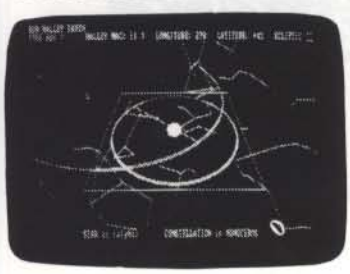

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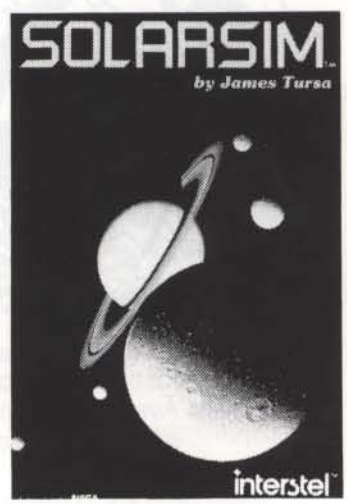

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